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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

THE Christian cause plainly stands to gain greatly if members of University teaching staffs are sympathetic, and if undergraduates are effectively brought within the influence of Christian teaching. Opinions vary, however, as to how this end may best be achieved. Are the normal University courses in the liberal Arts, in Science, Medicine, Law, or Engineering to be regarded as secular disciplines, where the appearance of religious teaching would be an intrusion? Or should each subject of study be a means of communicating truth to which religious belief is not irrelevant and in which the spiritual insight of teachers and students may affect the enterprise in which they are engaged? Acceptance of the first of these views implies that religious influence must be exercised mainly through personal contacts, the activities of undergraduate societies, the worship of the College Chapel or the work of University chaplains. The alternative approach would go much further in trying to make an explicit place for the interests of religion within the various available curricula.

In *Christian Faith and Higher Education*[1] Professor Nels F. S. FERRÉ brings philosophical insight, a wide knowledge of education and profound religious experience to the development of the second of these points of view. Thus he declares that every Christian teacher must aim at securing acceptance of God's will above all else 'even though his specific commitment is to the teaching, with integrity and competence, of a special area of truth. He who teaches merely chemistry is not a Christian teacher; the chemistry professor, by his very being and total stance, makes people conscious of the deeper reverence and the holier reality.' This is not merely to stress the personal influence of a Christian teacher, for Dr. FERRÉ devotes three chapters to a discussion of the significance of religion for Natural Science and the Social Sciences, for History, Art, and Literature, and for Philosophy. What is really involved is the enormously difficult enterprise of securing, in the first place, a teaching staff able to combine academic and technical distinction with Christian faith. Beyond this the same principle should extend to the administrative departments. 'The administrator should first of all be Christian, motivated by high religion and a holy zeal for truth.' To complete the ideal picture the maintenance staff should also be selected 'with a view to Christian character and efficiency.' The result will be the building up of a Christian community within which the student will not only be trained in the subjects of his academic study, but will also be nurtured in a genuinely religious atmosphere.

The difficulties of applying such principles, even in the American setting, are recognized by Dr. FERRÉ when he distinguishes between three main types of college. The fundamentalist institution does not commend itself to him. It is often educationally weak as well as reactionary in religious outlook. 'Kindergarten or backwoods religion cannot cope with the growth of modern knowledge.' The secular university, while often hospitable to religion, does not provide adequate opportunity for a true Christian community. There remain the 'Christian' Colleges, sometimes Church supported, none totally Christian, yet providing at least the framework for the kind of higher education which Dr. FERRÉ would wish to see integrated with Christian teaching. The centrality of 'theology' in such education might thus be demonstrated in practice in a confessedly Christian College in spite of the difficulties in a similar proposal for a secular University felt by such a writer as Sir Walter Moberly, to whose 'The Crisis in the University' sympathetic reference is several times made by Dr. FERRÉ.

The pattern of genuinely Christian education, it is here maintained, will be different from any secular methods of teaching because it is based on insight into God's own way of teaching, which we do well to follow. For many readers the most intriguing part of Dr. FERRÉ's treatment will be the chapters on God as Educator and on Learning from God. Our educational methods will depend ultimately on our view of the whole cosmic process.

[1] Harper Brothers; $3.00.

Is it simply a patchwork or an experiment ? Is it not rather ' God's patient preparation for the teaching situation ' in which He may educate His children in the truth ? His methods are indirect and vicarious, working through concrete situations and the guidance of prophetic souls. He affords seemingly unlimited freedom, and yet maintains a discipline awe-inspiring in its severity. He claims decision on great issues and nurtures the spiritual growth of the committed life within the community of the Christian faith. He educates the many always through the influence and example of the few. It may seem something of an anti-climax to apply these principles in class-room and laboratory ; to case methods of teaching and group discussions ; to questions of credits and diplomas and degree examinations ; to academic discipline and methods of selecting candidates for training. But if we agree with Dr. FERRÉ that our failures in education are due to our unwillingness to adopt God's ways of teaching, then we must be ready to carry these principles into practice. This, at least, is to some extent possible for the individual Christian teacher, even if the achievement of a fully Christian University or College, with its ideal of community life, remains, as Dr. FERRÉ admits, as yet unknown in our experience.

The life and work of great Biblical scholars have a romance and an inspiration which transcend all national barriers. It is therefore with the keenest interest that we open a small book entitled *Early Christianity : The Purpose of Acts and Other Papers,* by the late Burton Scott EASTON, edited appropriately by Professor F. C. Grant, and prefaced by a short account of Dr. EASTON's life and work.[1] B. S. EASTON is well known in Great Britain, especially as the author of several books of outstanding interest—his ' Commentary on St. Luke,' ' The Gospel Before the Gospels,' ' Christ in the Gospels,' and ' The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus.' These writings, together with his ' Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles,' are only a few among Dr. EASTON's many works, not to speak of numerous articles which he contributed to the ' Anglican Theological Review,' of which he was editor along with others for over thirty years. In all lands in which Biblical studies are pursued, Dr. EASTON has left an abiding reputation for wide learning, patient and accurate industry, and sound judgment on disputed questions.

Born in 1877, of New England stock, Dr. EASTON was first a teacher of mathematics. Subsequently, after ordination in the Anglican Church, he began his life work as a teacher of the New Testament, first at Nashotah House in Wisconsin, then at Western Theological Seminary in Chicago, and, from 1919–1948, at the General Theological Seminary, New York City. Even after his retirement he was most eager to continue lecturing, and insisted more than once that unless he could lecture there was no point in his living longer. He died on 7th March, 1950.

[1] S.P.C.K. ; 12s. 6d. net.

Professor Grant thinks that it was fortunate for Dr. EASTON's theological thinking and Scriptural exegesis that he received so early a training in pure mathematics. ' The utter clarity of his thought, the conciseness and compactness of its expression, the unhesitating, even eager, approach to fresh problems, the refusal to guess at answers, the frank willingness to recognize some problems as insoluble for lack of evidence or in the absence of certain of their essential factors—all this was quite probably to some extent a consequence of his early years devoted to the study and teaching of mathematics.' This discipline, said to be especially beneficial for the study of Hebrew, is apparently advantageous to Biblical studies in general.

Of particular interest is Professor Grant's account of Dr. EASTON's home, and, connected therewith, his relationships with his students. ' It was a home filled with intellectual and spiritual vitality, a home of scholarship and learning, but also a home of earnest piety and devotion—a little bit like an old-fashioned German professor's home, but with more good humour, vivacity, and informality.' The account is so attractive and so deeply suggestive that a further quotation, even if a little lengthy, may be permitted.

' The light from the green-shaded study lamp could be seen all the way to the cloister, and many a night it burned until one or two. A student venturing to call on a week-day evening might find Dr. EASTON deep in some problem of the New Testament text. On a large sheet of paper he had copied out in full every significant variant reading of the passage to be found in manuscripts, versions, and patristic quotations ; and there he sat pondering the problem of their interrelations, as he might have faced a problem on calculus or spherical trigonometry. Or the visitor might have a volume of Loisy's *Les Evangiles Synoptiques* thrust into his hands with the command, " Read this paragraph, and tell me what is wrong with it " ! Or he might be encouraged to take home with him and study Johannes Weiss's *Aelteste Evangelium,* which Dr. EASTON had just finished—not reading, but " working through," with tiny circles enclosing each page number as its gist had been transferred to his notes. Or the visitor, as the chiefest privilege of all, might be permitted to look into

those notes: the briefest, most compact précis of commentaries and introductions, articles in journals, grammars, lexicons. Here, in the wide, but never wide enough, margins of an octavo Greek New Testament edited by Eberhard Nestle (the Württemberg Bible Society edition) was compressed the quintessence of volume after volume of exegesis.'

Dr. EASTON's American students are not his only debtors. Many British students know that they kept a steady balance when Form Criticism presented its challenge to them, and were able to appreciate its merits as well as see its shortcomings, because they pondered Dr. Easton's criticisms as well as his more positive contributions. One golden sentence stands out in his 'Gospel Before the Gospels': 'The primary historic value of the Synoptists is not for their own age but for the tradition of the teachings of Jesus.' It was an opinion based on full and fearless study.

The Mari Letters—*continued*

By Cyril J. Gadd, British Museum

THE new legitimate occupant of the throne at Mari was Zimri-Lim—principal character and principal collector of the Letters, contemporary, ally, correspondent, adviser, and finally (for unknown reasons) victim of the celebrated Hammurabi of Babylon. It is during the reign of this prince that the letters illustrate most vividly the condition of Western Asia. The death of the great Samsi-Adad left the hegemony open; Ishme-Dagan his son, now king of Assyria, was evidently not the man to hold what his father had grasped, and there were several candidates. A remarkably outspoken, even cynical, pronouncement upon the possible claimants is already famous. It was made by an agent of Mari before a convention of shaykhs invited to a feast, where their support was canvassed on behalf of Zimri-Lim. 'There is no king,' declared the bold orator, 'really powerful in himself. Some ten or fifteen kings go with Hammurabi of Babylon, as many with Rim-Sin of Larsa, as many with Ibal-pi-el of Eshnunna, as many with Amut-pi-el of Watanum, and twenty with Iarim-Lim of Iamkhad (Aleppo).' Hammurabi, thus dismissed as not even *primus inter pares* shortly before, did at length triumph over his rivals in Larsa, Eshnunna, even over Mari itself, but we know little of his relations with the more formidable rival in Syria. Yet it is certain that the kingdom of Aleppo was flourishing long after this; and the Mari Letters have thus, at least by implication, contributed to demolish the idea once held by historians concerning the bounds of Hammurabi's rule. That it ever extended up the Euphrates much farther than the territory of Mari is unlikely.

It is not possible to reconstruct from undated Letters the constant shifts of diplomacy and war between these competing 'powers,' but one after another illustrates the process with ever-changing aspects. Not a few pass between the kings themselves, but, as is natural in the archives of one state, more are preserved from ambassadors and spies (they are scarcely distinguishable) whom the king of Mari maintained at the Courts of his 'brothers.' One of the chief attractions of these is the ample view they afford not only of contemporary life and thought, but of personalities like Hammurabi himself. The Marian envoys at Babylon boasted of the confidential footing they had attained with the king, reported his doings, and explained, perhaps with some over-confidence, what they affirmed to be his policy: 'when any affair is being revolved in the mind of Hammurabi he sends for me and I go to him wherever he is residing. Any affair which is being revolved in his mind he talks (about it) to me, and all the principal affairs that he talks about I am continually writing to my lord' (*i.e.*, to Zimri-Lim). These affairs were generally army operations and transport, movement of troops and supplies to and from allies of to-day, who were as like to be enemies to-morrow. In these transactions Hammurabi took a leading part, and many glimpses are caught of him as an organizer and strategist. Before his final struggle with Rim-Sin of Larsa the two had been in alliance, but one Letter reports an excuse of Rim-Sin which betrays the little trust subsisting between them—the message was brought by 'four men riding on donkeys, men of Larsa,' who made no difficulty about divulging their errand to the agent of Mari. Later, the war with Larsa is imminent and Hammurabi sends to Zimri-Lim for reinforcements: 'I am about to appear (on the battlefield) with Rim-Sin, king of Larsa, and the governor of Eshnunna has taken his stand with

me ; now send troops so that I may achieve that purpose.' Other enterprises were shared by the two ; one of their failures was to intercept a hostile force with a contingent of heavy infantry. Hammurabi himself was obliged to admit ' that contingent has returned empty, and the enemy's march keeps going on . . . so now let a light force go and intercept the enemy's march.' The outcome of this order was a combined expedition of three hundred men each from Mari and Babylon, whose operations were to be guided by the science of two diviners, one from each city, who marched before their men. Of another military undertaking which the cities shared we do not learn the outcome : Hammurabi informs a minister at Mari, ' I have sent some heavy infantry to Zimri-Lim. As you know, the way which those troops have to go is long,' but their objective was the city of Razama, besieged by enemies, which the allies sought to relieve ; ' keep on sending me news,' continues Hammurabi, ' of Razama, and news of the hostile forces besieging Razama. Let your news come to me continually.' It was an anxious moment, for Hammurabi was writing at the same time in almost identical terms to another informant. Considerable resources were often at stake, as when the king of Babylon was asked for ten thousand men, and naturally demurred at this until the plans of the enemy were clearer, but he was not unprepared to hazard even such forces. A correspondent writes, ' four days before I have sent you this tablet ten thousand troops of Babylon passed through from Sippar.' There is a glimpse of the composition of such forces, when Samsi-Adad wanted a body of sentries for the palace ; one company of two hundred to be ' sons of gentlemen ' and another to be constituted of ' common soldiers,' the latter to be fairly provided for in the palace, the ' gentlemen ' to be received in the private houses of the town. It is in the midst of such affairs that Hammurabi is generally seen, conferring with ambassadors, reviewing troops, complaining of his allies' support, sometimes excusing his own, and once standing upon his dignity after an embarrassing scene with some touchy envoys who thought they were not accorded due honours, and made a great fuss.

From one side or the other of these shifting alliances comes into the Letters much military detail concerning the raising and employment of armies in the field. Of actual battle-tactics, indeed, there is nothing to be learned, but siege-warfare is often mentioned with details which show, at least, that the Amorite princes commanded all the resources later illustrated by the Assyrian sculptures. If the town was not to be captured at a first assault, a regular siege was begun by digging a trench about the walls. The besieged were not thus cut off from all intelligence with their friends, for they made use of fire-signals, doubtless according to an arranged code. When two forces faced each other across the Euphrates, where each had fortified a village on his own side, the enemy (of the correspondent) seeing the hostile forces rapidly increasing, ' raised a fire, and all the villages on the other bank answered him,' so that a strong garrison was soon concentrated in the brick fortress opposite, and the writer thought better of attacking it. But to capture a stronghold the walls had to be either breached or crossed. No ballistic weapons seem to have been known (nor were they to the Assyrians), but two other siege engines are named in the Letters, the ' tower ' from which missiles could command the defenders, and the battering-ram to break through or shake down the structure of the walls, its effect often furthered by mining under the foundations. Ishme-Dagan, the warlike brother, describes his capture of cities with these engines, which achieved his purpose, once in seven and once in eight days. But more often the massive ramparts were proof against these shocks, and the only resource was to cross over them by assault up a bank of earth (ladders are never mentioned). Ishme-Dagan, as his father related with unsparing zeal to the sluggish brother, had captured the town of Nilimmar, ' so long as the earth had not reached up to the head of the city(-wall) he did not capture the city, but after the earth had reached the head of the city he captured that city ; Ishme-Dagan is well, the troops are well.' This was already known as the classic age of military engineering, and the construction of ramps for the overpassing of walls was the subject of exact calculation, of volume, distance, man-days, and the like, which professed to regard the fall of strongholds as a mere matter of computation. More singular to our thought is the parallel importance of another kind of military experts, the adepts in divination by the entrails of sacrificed victims. These accompanied most armies and contingents, and their opinions had usually decisive weight for or against the undertaking of a march or battle. They, as well as the engineers, could reckon the time in which a city must capitulate or a battle be fought. There was no lack of practitioners in this honoured calling although the training was arduous and the risks considerable, yet it seems there had to be a local expert officially appointed in every important place ; in spite of which a superior adept, reporting to his lord, announces his plan to take the omens for each centre in the kingdom, and recommends himself by tacking a sample of his art (with a favourable significance) to the end of his letter. In a matter of such weight it would not do for the princes

themselves to be wholly unversed, and we therefore hear of 'oracles' being sent by messenger from one to the other, with interpretations. This may indeed refer only to written technical summaries of the evidence, but from the language of Ishme-Dagan, writing to his brother, it might seem that the organs themselves were thus bandied about. At least it is clear that the pretentious 'science' of the 'seers' lent itself to sufficient equivocation, for the writer of that letter scouts the gloomy forebodings of his junior, and confidently assures him 'there is nothing whatever to worry about.'

While professors of this master art concerned themselves mostly with affairs of State and war—although they could condescend to forecasting the best three days for the barley-harvest, or the recovery from sickness of a favourite in the harim—there was another channel of divine manifestation in the 'prophets' or ecstatics, who seem to have been sometimes inspired dreamers. Occasionally their messages also were directed to the highest quarters, and one of the most interesting Letters illumines with a very curious light some ancient conceptions of religion and statecraft. While Zimri-Lim was absent on a campaign against the 'Benjaminites' an official wrote a report upon the following strange occurrence: a certain humble person told him that, in a dream, he seemed to be entering the city of Terqa. As soon as he got there he went to offer a prayer in the temple of the god Dagan, when suddenly the god began to speak. First he asked, were the 'Benjaminites' on good terms with the king? Being answered no, he kept silence until the man was leaving the presence, when he suddenly resumed, 'Why are not messengers of Zimri-Lim before me constantly, to set forth his affairs in detail? If they had done so, many days ago I should have delivered the shaykhs of the "Benjaminites" into the hands of Zimri-Lim. Now go therefore, I send you to give this message to Zimri-Lim,' and this was, that if the king would send messengers and keep the god informed of all his business, he, Dagan, would capture the shaykhs and bring them into submission. 'That,' adds the writer, 'is what this man saw in a dream.' The Semitic intimacy of relation between man and god is touchingly illustrated in this episode, so significant in the history of ideas concerning divine communications, and of prophecy itself. There was nothing exceptional in this message from the god; at another time he sent, again through a dreamer, as it seems, a command on no account to neglect a sacrifice to the dead, appointed for the fourteenth of the next month.

As is natural, the Letters have innumerable points of cultural interest, occurring constantly among the discussion of miscellaneous subjects. There is something about the position of women: a whole volume of Letters from these is said to be in preparation, but meantime several are eloquent enough. A sister of Zimri-Lim defends herself against slander and begs to be granted a supplement to her flock of sheep. Another, calling herself 'mistress of the land,' bids the king not to take it ill that she has not sent what he wanted because no asses were on hand, 'if there be any asses in your dwelling I will have brought to you the best of mine and anything that is in your dwelling.' But other Letters are sadder, perhaps from discarded favourites: 'How long am I to tarry at Nakhur? Peace is established and the road is free. Let my lord write for them to take me back, that I may see my lord's face. . . . Now do, my lord, send me an answer,' or again, 'Since the day when I left my lord I have been in need of food and fuel, and the future is more dark than the past. Let my lord write for them to bring me back; I am sick at heart more than ever before.' These suffering frailties are in sharp and timeless contrast with an Amazonian character in the news passing at that time, a certain 'woman of Nawar' who was in command of ten thousand wild Gutian mountaineers in a reported raid, 'their faces are set towards Larsa.' A provincial governor wrote twice to the king, first to say he has received favourable omens for the health of a court lady, Kunshimatum, but later he behoved to admit that she had been ill for four days, and the complaint was serious, he thought. About physicians not a little is heard. Kings sent to each other for noted healers to attend themselves or their servants, just as they sent for musicians or cooks. One of these doctors was declared to be in possession of a sovereign remedy, and a king who owed him a complete cure sent his personal physician to learn its use. Another was highly recommended as a very capable fellow, who should on no account be lost to sight. However, their patients were not always royal, for a garrison commander sent to ask for 'a doctor and a mason. The city-wall is falling down and there is none to rebuild it; now if a stone injures a man there is no doctor (to tend him).' One of these had taken to evil courses in the company of five cooks, and had run away from Assyria to gay Mari. The stern old Samsi-Adad demanded their return under guard and in irons, declaring 'they came to you only for the ale-wife's house and for merrymaking.' The deceptive recovery of a sufferer from an unnamed disease gave rise to a very sensational affair—a son fell sick and sent for his father, who came and attended him for ten days until he seemed recovered. The father was preparing to travel to another town but on that day the son attacked him and cut his

throat. At the same time the writer was resting in the house, when the madman entered his room, and thinking him asleep was about to murder him also; but the intended victim leapt up, seized him, and put him in confinement. An epidemic was doubtless thought to be beyond human skill, for a harassed administrator had to report that, in a certain district under his charge 'a god has set his hand to consume oxen and men, and two or three men die every day.'

Architects were in frequent demand, one being wanted to work on Samsi-Adad's palace—'why is he there with you? Why is he idle? . . . send him to Shubat-Enlil, and on no account shall he be taken away from here.' Others were not so easily able to command skilled service; an officer arriving at a provincial town found part of the wall in ruins, and there was not an architect in the district. There used to be one, but he has 'long since passed away, and even when the fellow was alive and well he couldn't build a thing.' Another was sent, but he too left after finishing one job and went back to the capital; so now let the king give an order to 'send me an architect whose intelligence is bright.' Carpenters were needed for building boats, but especially chariots and wagons, and Mari had a reputation for them, 'there are complaints (here in Assyria),' writes Ishme-Dagan, 'about the palace transport. The Mari wagons are better than those of (my) country, (so) let a Marian wagon-wright be sent to me' in exchange for a local artisan. Transport indeed dominates these Letters, in which the key-word is 'send'—letters, persons, and commodities—but nevertheless the means of transport were primitive. Heavy burdens could be carried only by boats, drifting and oaring downstream and having to be towed up, but land conveyance was almost entirely by asses, and when these failed there was no means of despatch. No use was made of horses for burdens, camels were yet unknown, and wheeled traffic seems to have been merely local, except for the chariots in which great persons travelled long distances, as when Samsi-Adad announced to his (doubtless apprehensive) son that he was about to visit him, by a journey which he marked out ahead with daunting efficiency in five stages. Wheeled transport was found necessary even by less august persons, for an official is found applying for a new chariot to facilitate his 'going here and there' through the country and the hills, his old chariot having got 'broken in the middle' through this arduous service, and the civil service tradition was firmly established by another, who wrote in for a subsistence grant, and was suavely answered by a superior, 'whenever you are residing in the provinces, your master will furnish your subsistence.'

The persons and things asked for and despatched are often, as befits the rank of the writers, ministers or materials of royal luxury. Doctors, musicians, singers, cooks, craftsmen, maids, as well as military officers are constantly in request, and still more varied are the commodities supplied from one ruler to another. Samsi-Adad presented his son with twenty minas of silver towards making a silver figure of himself, but exacted a complete account of all expenses to be incurred about the work, and at other times was not sparing in his demands for various kinds of wood. He also required a regular supply of game birds to be sent every two or three days. His other son wanted some fish which lived only in one particular pool to be supplied to him, and also desired a liberal quantity of seed to grow junipers in a garden which he was planting. Iasmakh-Adad himself received valuable presents from Carchemish of wine, honey, cloth, and curious stone, and Zimri-Lim, as well as a load of truffles from one faithful servant, received from another a more extraordinary, but presumably welcome, consignment: the king is informed that a lion had been caught in a village barn. The beast had been there five days, while waiting for the king's pleasure to be known. Meantime, he has been fed with a dog and a pig, but his captor, fearing escape, could not risk waiting longer, so 'I got the lion into a wooden cage, loaded it on a boat, and (thus) forward it to my lord.' The wooden cage is called, literally, a 'life-preserver'—to the lion or the keepers? A last example of the value of royal gifts is so characteristic of contemporary life and manners that it must not be omitted—the freedom of style which marks these letters here meets the Oriental bargaining instinct upon the fair ground of horse-dealing. The missive from which the following extracts are quoted was addressed to an Assyrian king. 'This matter,' writes a brother prince 'is really unspeakable, but now I must say it and relieve my heart. You are a great king, and you asked me for the two horses which you wanted. I despatched them to you—and now you send me twenty minas of tin. You received what you wanted from me without argument and directly, (and now) you send me this trifle of tin! . . . the price of those horses here with us at Qatna is six hundred (shekels) of silver, and you send twenty minas of tin! Whoever hears of it, what will he say? . . . Yet this house (of mine) is yours, and what is lacking in your house, that brother should not grant brother his desire? . . . You are no great king! Why did you do this?' The letter was found at Mari, that is, neither at its origin nor its destination, so perhaps it was suppressed by an intermediary, who may well have thought that, even between 'brothers,' this plain dealing was overdone.

Literature

STUDIES IN ISAIAH

In *Studies in Isaiah* Professor Edward J. Young, Th.M., Ph.D., of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, has gathered together a number of articles he has published over the last twenty years in 'The Westminster Theological Journal' (Tyndale Press; 12s. 6d. net). Their purpose is 'to acquaint the reader with recent criticism of Isaiah and to defend the New Testament interpretation of the book.' Three of the eight articles are on 'The Study of Isaiah since the Time of Joseph Addison Alexander,' whose commentary on the Book was published in 1846–1847; two are on 'The Immanuel Prophecy (Isaiah 7^{14-16})'; and the remaining three on 'The Suffering Servant.'

The article, 'Of Whom Speaketh the Prophet This?,' is an examination of Eissfeldt's form of the collective interpretation [1933] and of Sellin's last word on the subject [1937], in which he identified the Servant with Deutero-Isaiah. 'The Origin of the Suffering Servant Idea' is concerned to say that if we are to seek for antecedents 'we shall find them, not in the mythological poems of Ras Shamra, but in special divine revelation.' 'The Meaning of יזה in Isaiah 52^{15}' defends the traditional rendering 'sprinkle.' In the Immanuel Prophecy articles Dr. Young maintains that the rendering 'a virgin' of the A.V. and R.V. texts is right, that '*almāh*' is the one word in the Hebrew language that would be ideal to describe an unmarried girl, but just about the worst possible word to describe a married woman.'

The articles on the study of Isaiah since Alexander take up one half of the volume. It is clear that Dr. Young's criticism of Isaiah is determined by what he regards as 'the New Testament interpretation of the book.' But this is not all: 'divisive, "atomistic" exegesis,' cutting up the prophecy into 'confetti,' is abhorrent to him. The villain of the piece is, of course, Duhm, and the Form-Critics fare little better. We must not test a writing by its theology (Duhm) nor yet by its *Sitz im Leben* (Gunkel). On the other hand, Torrey, who asserts the unity of chs. 34–35, 40–66, and Elliger, who asserts the unity of 'Trito-Isaiah,' come in for commendations. Torrey's work is 'extremely refreshing' and has 'not received the serious attention which it deserves.' Elliger's is 'extremely valuable.' There is need for a new commentary on Isaiah and such a commentary should be written along the lines which Alexander followed. 'It must also take into consideration the vast literature of the past one hundred years.' But it is clear that in Dr. Young's opinion most of this vast literature has been radically in error.

C. R. North

KING AND MESSIAH

It is well known that in Scandinavia several influential Old Testament scholars have vigorously challenged the commonly accepted methods and results of literary criticism, and have also advanced far-reaching hypotheses about Old Testament religion. Mr. E. Nielsen's short work on oral tradition, published last year, provides a useful guide to the first of these fields. Now in the late Professor Aage Bentzen's *King and Messiah* (Lutterworth Press; 10s. 6d. net) we are offered a well documented account of some of the most important theories in the other.

The book is a translation and revision of the author's German work, *Messias—Moses redivivus—Menschensohn* [1948], published in the series 'Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments.' This English edition is an immense improvement in format on the other; and the publishers are to be complimented on producing a book which is a delight to handle and use.

The substance of the work has also been improved. Not that any very considerable additions have been made to the text: a page or a paragraph has been added here, or a paragraph modified elsewhere, leaving the general plan and proportions of the book as they were before. But the argument has been clarified; and, on some points, the author's position has been restated in the light of subsequent discussion. The notes have been extensively revised and brought up-to-date; and they form a very useful guide to the recent literature of the subject.

Taking for granted the approach to the Psalms made possible by the work of Gunkel and Mowinckel, Bentzen accepts, with modifications, some of the positions about sacral or divine kingship adopted by the more enterprising Uppsala scholars. His opening chapters examine a number of the Psalms, in an attempt to reconstruct the ritual of the Enthronement Festival and the king's part in it. This leads to a consideration of the king, the adopted Son of God, as a '*present* Messiah,' and as First Man or *Urmensch*. Bentzen agrees with those who think that Gn 1 and Ps 8

describe the First Man as First King ; but he goes further, and finds in the idea of First Man or Patriarch a category more fundamental than that of sacral king, covering a wide range of functions, and capable of individual and corporate application. At this point, the argument of the earlier edition has been developed in the light of some of the work of H. S. Nyberg, the distinguished Uppsala Orientalist.

The theme is taken further in the chapter on the Servant of Yahweh, which is largely a running commentary on the views of Engnell and Nyberg. Bentzen admits the influence of the so-called royal ideology on the Servant Songs, but declines to interpret the Servant figure solely or mainly in these terms. The Servant ' exhibits specially the features of the Ancestor—the Patriarch . . . He is " Israel " in the sense both of the ancestor and the people.' He is also a new Moses, liberating his people from bondage. Some critics of the German edition had misinterpreted this latter notion (perhaps with some justification, in view of the term *Moses redivivus*) ; but Bentzen now makes it plain that he does not mean either a reincarnated Moses or a resurrected Moses.

In a final chapter, we are shown how, in the dream vision of Dn 7, the ancient pattern of the Enthronement Festival reappears in an eschatological setting, in which the Kingdom of God is incarnated in the Heavenly Son of Man. The concluding paragraphs of the book carry us further along the line of development which links the patterns of Old Testament thought with the message of the New Testament.

Most of the themes discussed in this work are highly controversial. The equation of the sacral king with the *Urmensch* has been criticized by Mowinckel and by the Swedish scholar, E. Sjöberg ; and I do not feel that Bentzen has entirely met their contentions. Again, there are those, of course, who feel that the whole nexus of theory about the sacral king implies a permeation of Israelite thought by Canaanite religion to an extent which is incompatible with the distinctive character of Hebrew religion. It is, however, one of the merits of Bentzen's treatment that he frequently emphasizes the transformation of what was borrowed, not least by the historical character of Israel's faith.

Professor Rowley rightly says in his Foreword that readers in this country will value this book most because it mediates much of the debate on its main themes which has taken place in the Scandinavian languages. To that debate, indeed, it is an indispensable guide, one of the chief merits of which is the temperate spirit in which the writer presents his arguments.

G. W. Anderson

JOHN WESLEY, PREACHER

Preachers may well ask John Wesley, as one who averaged fifteen sermons a week for fifty years, to give them the benefit of his experience. This is what the author, the Rev. W. L. Doughty, B.A., B.D., seeks to do in *John Wesley, Preacher* (Epworth Press ; 18s. 6d. net), under chapter headings such as ' Congregations,' ' Mobs,' ' Effects,' ' Style,' ' Voice and Gesture.' Some of the findings will cause surprise. Wesley, though occasionally breaking his own rule, forbade long sermons : ' People imagine the longer a sermon is, the more good it will do. This is a grand mistake. The help done on earth, God doth it Himself ; and He doth not need that we should use many words ' (p. 177). He disliked a succession of sermons : ' that vile custom of preaching three times a day . . . to the same congregation, enough to weary out both bodies and minds ' (p. 178). Sermons printed may not be the same as sermons preached, but we have little evidence that Wesley used sermon illustrations, and he seldom quoted (pp. 155, 158). He advised plain speech, yet gave the advice in the following donnish sentences : ' Conciseness brings *quantum sufficit* of strength. If I observe any stiff expression I throw it out. . . . I speak *ad populum*, plain truth for plain people ' (p. 142 f.). He often preached old sermons. After tracing the fortunes of one on his ' sermon register,' Mr. Doughty says, ' It has a long record of distinguished service from . . . June 1742 to October 1790, 48 years ' (p. 186). Wesley himself asserts, ' I know not that I can write a better (sermon) on the Circumcision of the Heart than I did five and forty years ago. I may have read five or six hundred books more . . . but I am not sensible that that has made any essential addition to my knowledge in divinity ' (p. 180)—which seems to speak ill of either the books or divinity. One sometimes wishes that instead of fulsome praise of his hero, the author might venture upon a smile at him, or a difference from him. Also he sometimes labours a point, and unduly lengthens a sentence. Page 105 contains one a hundred and seven words long.

The material is full of interest. Here, for example, are two almost contemporary (1769 and 1770) descriptions of Wesley in the pulpit : ' He has not great oratorical gifts, no outward appearance. . . . He is a small thin old man, with his own long and strait hair, and looks as the worst country curate . . . but has learning for a Bishop, and zeal for the glory of God which is quite extraordinary ' (p. 113). ' He appeared like one come down from heaven to teach men the way thither. . . . To me he seemed like one of the Apostles going about confirming the churches. I and the

friends who accompanied me were . . . thankful to the Lord who had given us to see and hear such a venerable and eminent minister of Christ' (p. 118). How much of what men see is in the eyes of the beholder!

JOHN FOSTER

ST. ANSELM

A book of first-rate importance is *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo,* by Principal John McIntyre, M.A., B.D., D.Litt. (Oliver and Boyd; 15s. net). It may well be said that he who chooses a great subject is half-way on the road to writing a great book; and Dr. McIntyre has chosen a great subject. He complains—and rightly—that 'no major Christian thinker has suffered quite so much from the hit-and-run tactics of historians of theism and soteriology' as Anselm has; and he holds that 'we dare not, except at grave peril of missing much that is good for us, dismiss unthinkingly anyone who prays as St. Anselm prays, and who at times makes his theology a prayer, a height to which few theologians have risen.' It is impossible to do justice to the close-knit examination and argument of this book in a brief notice of it. It is a salutary thing for any one to be brought face to face again with Anselm's great declaration and prayer: 'I do not attempt, oh Lord, to soar to Thy height, because I do not in any way compare my understanding with Thine; but I do desire to understand Thy truth as far as my heart believes and loves it. For I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but *I believe in order that I may understand.* For this also I do believe; that "I shall not understand unless I believe."'

But Anselm was no obscurantist. 'I judge no one to be blameworthy,' he says, 'if, being established in his faith, he should wish to employ himself in the search for its reason.' 'It appears to me to be negligence on our part, if, after we have been confirmed in our faith, we do not endeavour to understand what we believe.' And it was Anselm's belief that the Christian faith could be proved so logically that even the pagan must capitulate. Again and again, however, the necessity of Christian experience comes out. As Dr. McIntyre says, 'First-hand experience surpasses second-hand hearsay.' Dr. McIntyre wisely points out that the Atonement did not take place, for Anselm, because of a kind of rational necessity which was, as it were, outside God; it took place because of the overflowing of divine grace. Therein lay its necessity. Dr. McIntyre has two valuable warnings. He says that Anselm has been misjudged for two reasons, and they are reasons which might apply to any writer. Anselm casts his work in dialogue form, and the discussion is real. Anselm must therefore never be judged by any penultimate answers. One must wait for and judge him by the final whole. Further, Anselm used analogies and must not be *fettered* by them. An analogy is an analogy and nothing more. This book is a notable contribution to scholarship, distinguished by careful and accurate use of the primary sources and real sympathetic insight into its subject. No theologian can afford to neglect this book, and the preacher will find it opening great thoughts for him on every page.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

THE COMMUNION

Appointment with God, by the Rev. J. B. Phillips (Epworth Press; 5s. net), has the sub-title 'Some Thoughts on Holy Communion.' It is written to help those who feel that the Sacrament ought to be one of the greatest of all religious experiences, but who have always been disappointed in their own experience of it, and who may have come to feel that they will never get from it that which they know they ought to get. This is a most practical and a most helpful book. Mr. Phillips has most helpful suggestions on our personal preparation for participation in the Sacrament. We must come with a body and a mind that are relaxed and untensed. Fasting before Communion is an ancient and a lovely custom, but if it induces bodily discomfort it must not become a fetish. We must never 'come to regard the fasting as at least as important as the Holy Food.' The physical position should be such that it relaxes the body and alerts the mind. There are five lines of thought on which we may meditate. (1) We may let our minds range quite freely over the vastness and complexity of God's wisdom and power, and realize that that wisdom and power are focused in Jesus. (2) We may think of that vast unseen world which exists quite independently of the space and time set up. (3) We may think of ourselves, small and feeble, in company with millions of others, carrying out the will of God in this act of Communion in a disrupted and disorganized world. (4) We may think of the memorial aspect of the Great Sacrifice. (5) We may reflect on the nature of sacrifice, and on how all great things come only at a price that some one must pay. There are at least three ways in which we may prepare our souls. (1) Without morbid 'muck-raking' we can freely admit our prides and cowardices, our lack of charity and faith. (2) Without whipping ourselves into a false state of emotion we can come in expectancy. (3) We can gently train our souls to respond to the love of God. The book ends with a great plea for a real ecumenicity. 'Holy Communion is intended surely

for all those who love our Lord and Saviour in sincerity and truth. This Mystery cannot be "cornered" by any denomination and reserved exclusively for the use of its own members. . . . I, for one, cannot see by what right I exclude my fellow-Christian from Communion with our common Lord.' It often happens that a book on the Sacrament is a polemical defence of the belief and practice of one branch of the Church; this book breathes a rare and lovely spirit of love to all in Christ.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

Fifteen sermons by representative Scots preachers have been edited by Dr. G. Johnstone Jeffrey—*The Sacramental Table* (James Clarke; 8s. 6d. net). 'Since the night on which Christ was betrayed until our own day,' Dr. Jeffrey writes in his Foreword, 'the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper has been observed in unbroken continuity. The imagination kindles when we remember the many and diverse places and circumstances in which Christians have sat down in reverence and humility to this Holy Feast—in the Upper Room itself, in the underground early Church in Rome, on our own bleak hillsides in Covenanting days, on battlefields and battleships, in great Cathedrals and in lonely churches in the countryside, in sick-rooms and hospitals, and at the oncoming of death. . . . To all who draw near to the Lord's table in contrition, reverence and in glad, lowly expectancy, these addresses are offered in the hope that the blessing and comfort of this immemorial rite may pass into deep places of their soul.'

With this inspiring volume in their hands no one can feel that the great days of Scottish preaching are over. The sermons are simple, yet profound and are lit up by devotion. We have quoted Dr. A. C. Craig's sermon (shortened) in 'The Christian Year.'

In his book, *Jaspers' Metaphysics* (Colibri Press, London; 10s. 6d. net), Dr. Adolph Lichtigfeld gives an account of Karl Jaspers' central philosophical positions as these are expounded in the three volume 'Philosophie.' Jaspers himself supplies a Foreword to the book and it is interesting that in it he stresses the intimate connexion between his basic philosophical contentions and his views on other subjects such as history.

Dr. Lichtigfeld has done for Professor Jaspers what Dr. Weber has done for Professor Barth—given a digest of his central work. Considerations of length alone make the former task less arduous than the latter, for the 'Philosophie' with all its three volumes is nothing like so long as the 'Kirchliche Dogmatik.' But the English reader is indebted to Dr. Lichtigfeld for providing an approach to the thought of the great contemporary European thinkers. It is a pity, however, that his introduction, which is an attempt to trace the development from Kant to Jaspers, is limited to eighteen not very large pages. The inevitable inadequacy of this part of the book contrasts with the main body of the work, where an honest and sustained attempt has been made to get at the meaning of Jaspers' metaphysics.

It is wonderful that a man in his eightieth year should write a book showing not only width of reading and clarity of writing but also evidence of an alert mind, a realistic view of the contemporary situation and an outlook of subdued hopefulness. These things may be said of *World Problems of To-day*, by Cyril Garbett, Archbishop of York (Hodder and Stoughton; 4s. 6d. net). The first part of the book deals with the Church and the World, the Ideals of Western Civilization, the Christian Standard of Conduct and kindred topics. The second part discusses World Hunger and Population, Peace and War in an Atomic Age, Christianity and Communism, the Colour Problem, Nationalism, Church and State. One fancies that the late Archbishop Temple would have wanted to add another problem—Finance and Physical Facts.

The conclusion is clearly stated—'ideas must be defeated by ideas, falsehood by truth, and a materialistic system by a spiritual civilization which draws its strength from the religion which has given it all that is best and noblest in its life.'

A Discourse on the Life to Come, by Stephen Hobhouse (Independent Press; 6s. net), is in the most literal sense an extraordinary book. Mr. Hobhouse is now seventy-two; and in this book he gathers up his thoughts about the life to come. Right at the beginning he quotes the stanza of the old German mystic Silesius:

> With Hope for pilgrim's staff I go,
> And Patience is my travelling dress,
> Wherewith through earthly weal and woe
> I fare to everlastingness.

This is a truly adventurous book. Mr. Hobhouse believes in an intermediate state. At death we pass into an etheric body, and then later into our final body of light. Mr. Hobhouse is a convinced universalist. 'It seems very unlikely that God could have contemplated failure in His creation of even one single personality.' For a universalist some kind of intermediate state is an essential. 'For most of us, probably, when we have passed over, there will be at the outset some time at least of fierce and bitter penitence.' 'There will be for millions a longer or shorter period of "purgation" or purifying discipline.' 'To us, in

any case, Hell must be considered as a state of strictly temporary and in the end reformatory punishment.' Perhaps the most daring of all Mr. Hobhouse's conceptions is that in the after-life the redeemed will still have a share in saving the unredeemed. 'We may therefore believe that, in co-operation with Christ and the blessed angels, there will be for us abundant opportunities in the future life of restoring to Him both those sinners who are still alive on this planet and those who have passed on from here into a hell of purifying punishment.' Mr. Hobhouse will have nothing to do with a heaven where the redeemed spend their time 'sitting among the lazy saints.' He quotes the American poet John Hay:

Saving a little child
And fetching him unto his own,
Is a darned sight better business
Than loafing around the throne.

Mr. Hobhouse draws continually not only on the Bible but on the poets and the mystics. This is a most startling book and yet it is pervaded by such a spirit of reverence and devotion that it never shocks, but only compels the reader to think.

It would be the easiest thing in the world to criticise the contents of *Religious or Christian*, by O. Hallesby, Ph.D., tr. by C. J. Carlsen (Inter-Varsity Fellowship; 6s. net). Its imprint will indicate its standpoint. 'The natural man feels inherently bitter toward God when He, with a heavy hand, breaks down his health, deprives him of strength to work, frustrates him in his plans and hopes, or breaks into his family circle and removes his dear ones.' Can we really speak of God doing that? Is it fair to say that 'The vast majority of theologians and the great majority of theological works, especially in the last two hundred years, have been at work covering up and concealing the Cross, or removing it. And the offence of the Cross has motivated it all'? Dr. Hallesby speaks of what he considers to be modern syncretism, but is it true to say that 'There is disagreement among the scholars concerning many of the details, it is true; but they are in perfect accord with reference to one thing. There is no real fundamental difference, they say, between Christianity and other religions'? It seems to us that that is a slander on modern theology and modern scholarship. And yet the fact remains this is a salutary book. It has intolerance in plenty; it has an almost complete inability to understand, much less to sympathize with, any point of view other than its own and any experience other than its own. But the fact remains this is a book which a man ought to read for the good of his own soul. It has a most penetrating and searching analysis of self-directed zeal as opposed to God-directed zeal. If people are moved by self-directed zeal certain things happen: (1) They may be engaged in Christian work, but it is done with themselves more in mind than the Lord. Their prestige matters more than God's work. (2) They tend not only to do the thing they have chosen to do, but also to insist upon being leaders of it. (3) Their self-directed zeal becomes so taken up with self that it becomes sensitive and irritable and for ever liable to take offence. (4) Self-directed zeal tends to become 'flighty and incoherent,' with no patience and perseverance for the routine, everyday tasks which have to be done unseen and unpraised. The tremendous virtue of this book is that it will compel a man to answer its own question: 'Am I a Christian? Or, am I merely religious?'

Three lectures given by former teachers in the Faculty of Theology at Manchester University, as an appropriate commemoration of its Jubilee, have been published with an historical introduction by Professor T. W. Manson, who contributes an interesting account of the Faculty's origin and development—*Theological Essays* (The John Rylands Library and Manchester University Press; 5s. net). Two of the lecturers chose themes from the fields in which they are recognized authorities. Professor L. E. Browne discusses the Value of the Comparative Study of Religion, commenting on features of Islamic, Hindu, and Buddhist belief and giving a stimulating answer to the question 'Why are you a Christian?' Professor C. H. Dodd shows how the principles of Form Criticism may be applied to the colloquies in which Jesus takes part as recorded in the Synoptic and Johannine Gospels, and throws new light on points of similarity and difference, comparing them also with the pattern of dialogue in the philosophical and religious teaching of the Hellenic world. The lecture by Dr. L. W. Grensted dealt with a more general topic—The Changing Background of Theological Studies. In a survey of the past half-century, it stresses the importance of communication, as between theologian and the man in the street and as between workers in different spheres—theological, scientific, or philosophical. 'The theology that cannot be preached in a mission sermon or worked out in the self-management of a boys' club is unsound theology.' It is no less true that the theologian must maintain contact with new developments in science, mathematics, and philosophy, all of which have 'intensified the demand for private languages . . . increasingly incomprehensible to everybody else.' On all this Dr. Grensted has wise observations, and concludes by insisting that specialists in the various depart-

ments of study are, like the common man, primarily human beings for whom spiritual truth is not irrelevant and to whom it may be communicated not only in words but in the practice of Christian living.

In the 'Home Study Books' there has appeared a volume on *The Life of Jesus Christ*, by the Rt. Rev. J. W. C. Wand, the Bishop of London (Methuen; 7s. 6d. net). The scholarship behind this book is masterly. In single paragraphs of the introductory material Dr. Wand gives summaries of the Synoptic Problem and of Form Criticism and its impact and importance which would be difficult to better. In a hundred and eighty pages Dr. Wand deals with the life of Jesus under a variety of headings—Early Years, Environment, Beginning of the Ministry, Growing Popularity, The Story-teller, The Turning-point, The Teacher, The Period of Opposition, The Wonder-worker, The Passion, The Last Days, The Triumph. The standpoint of the book tends to be conservative. Dr. Wand would accept the Virgin Birth; he takes most of the miracles as they stand; he gives a high historical value to the Gospel record. On p. 36 Dr. Wand says that when Archelaus was deposed Pontius Pilate was put in his place. This is an obvious slip, because there were four Roman procurators before Pilate arrived on the scene. On p. 151 he says that Jesus and the disciples went out to the Mount of Olives after singing the Hallel (Ps 113–118). This again is a slip. The Hallel was sung in two portions during the Passover Feast; and the final song of praise was the Great Hallel, which is Ps 136. We point this out because we think that this scholarly and devotional book may well become a text-book in the training of ministers and teachers, and we hope that future editions will provide the opportunity for corrections to be made. This book is the work of a scholar making his scholarship generously available for others.

There is more consecrated and concentrated common-sense in *The Salvationist and His Leisure*, by Lieut.-Commissioner Frederick L. Coutts (Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd.; 9d.) than we have seen in any book on the subject of leisure for a long time. The Christian is never off duty, but at the same time 'For the glory of God, for the salvation of souls, and for the sake of his own perseverance in the heavenly course, a soldier should take care of his body.' Leisure is not an extra; it is an essential. Three principles to govern the use of leisure are laid down. (1) The Salvation soldier will not engage in any so-called pastime which is morally wrong. This rules out drinking, gambling, and blood sports. (2) He will not engage in anything which might lessen the force of his own personal example, nor increase the pressure of temptation on others. This means he must carefully discriminate what entertainment he attends. He cannot keep wireless and television out of his home, but he must choose what he will listen to or view. (3) There are recreations which are physically beneficial and ethically sound, but which, if carried to excess, would prevent the Salvationist giving due time and attention to duty. Here there must be a discerning restraint. Three principles are laid down for 'the consecration of leisure.' (*a*) The Salvationist will never spend either more time or more money on luxuries than on God's work. (*b*) No Salvationist will selfishly indulge in any form of recreation at the expense of his home. (*c*) The place of personal recreation should be sensibly related to the requirements of bodily health. Playing is better than watching and doing is better than listening. It is true that the Salvationist will sometimes take a more austere view of leisure than others would. For instance, the ban on smoking is not relaxed. But in twenty-four pages this book lays down principles by which every man might profitably govern his use of leisure and of pleasure.

In *The Saving Name* (S.C.M.; 7s. 6d. net), the Rev. Hedley Hodkin, who is Vicar of Holy Trinity, Millhouses, Sheffield, has gathered together certain papers which he originally wrote for his parish magazine. There is an introduction to the book by the Bishop of Sheffield, who quotes H. R. L. Sheppard as saying that 'Whenever he came across a parish magazine he tore it up in order to prevent it doing any more harm.' But in this case these papers well deserved preservation and publication. There are twenty-four short papers in this little book. They include papers on such subjects as 'The Meaning of the Cross,' 'The Resurrection,' 'The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity,' 'The New Dogma of the Bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary,' 'Marriage,' 'Divine Healing,' 'Memory—Its Uses and Abuses.' Mr. Hodkin has a gift for the telling phrase and the apt quotation. John Donne said: 'Cæsar is not Cæsar still, nor Alexander Alexander, but Jesus is Jesus still and shall be for ever.' 'The envy and jealousy of good men are more terrible than the violence of the wicked.' 'Another reason why the working classes are turning their eyes away from the workman of Nazareth is this. When Christians have had Christ at their tongue's end to speak of Him, they have not always had Him at their fingers' end to act His discourse and to practise His way of life.' The great value of this book is that there is just enough in these papers to set a man thinking for himself. There is no doubt that these little chapters will be the begetters of many sermons.

Karl Barth

By Professor Thomas F. Torrance, D.D., D.Theol., New College, Edinburgh

In speaking of Karl Barth the late Professor H. R. Mackintosh used to recall Creevey's words about Lord Grey: 'Take him all in all, I never saw his fellow; nor can I see any indication of him on the stocks.' Karl Barth is incontestably the greatest figure in modern theology since Schleiermacher, occupying an honoured position among the great élite of the Church—Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin.

Karl Barth was born in May, 1886, the son of a Swiss minister, a member of an old Basler family known also for paintings hung in the city Art Gallery. No generation of Barths has rejoiced more in the artistic riches of Europe than the present. Karl Barth is himself passionately fond of music, particularly of Mozart. He who understands his love of Mozart, says Barth, understands his theology. His youngest son is a professional artist and a landscape gardener. The eldest, Markus, is himself a distinguished theologian now occupying a Chair in the University of Dubuque. Another son, Christoph, is a missionary professor in Borneo, very much beloved by his students.

Karl Barth began his career as a minister of the Word of God in Geneva, and then in Safenwil in Aargau. It was there that he published his first edition of his celebrated *Commentary on Romans* which exploded like a bomb in the religious thought of Europe, and marked the beginning of one of the great eras in the history of Christian thought. Two years later he was called to a Chair in Germany, at Göttingen. In 1925 he went to Münster, and in 1930 he became Professor at Bonn, where he lectured to overflowing class-rooms until forced to leave under the Nazi régime when he refused to take the oath demanded by Hitler. Called back to Basel in Switzerland, his home University, he has remained there ever since.

Two outstanding personal characteristics mark all his work and thought. (1) He has the most searching, questioning mind I have ever known. Never have I heard or read of any one who asks questions so relentlessly or who engages in such ruthless criticism, not with any negative intention, but *in order to let the truth bespeak itself clearly and positively*. (2) He has an uncanny ability to listen which is accompanied by an astonishing humility and childlikeness in which he is always ready to learn. That is what overwhelms the student as he enters into the great man's study for the first time. He goes in fear and trembling, but soon finds that the Professor has turned the tables on him, and is asking him questions, drawing him out and listening to him as if he were the disciple and the student were the teacher! Few men are really able to listen like that, and fewer still are able to maintain a genuine listening attitude while posing such searching questions, but in Karl Barth *ruthless criticism is made the servant of his will to listen.*

In seeking to understand other great thinkers one examines their historical context and the influences that have shaped and conditioned their outlook. That context and influence cannot be neglected in the case of Karl Barth, whose thought is very much concerned with the great movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but here is a theologian who stands head and shoulders above it all and reaches back through it all in almost unparalleled fashion. The context of Barth's thought and the influences upon him can be measured only by measuring the whole history of Christian theology. That is supremely evident in the massive volumes of his *Kirchliche Dogmatik* throughout which he carries on a discussion with the whole history of dogma, and often learns most from those with whom he disagrees most, such as Schleiermacher or Aquinas, but is concerned from first to last to be absolutely faithful to the Holy Scriptures.

His comprehensive grasp and wrestling with the whole history of Christian thought makes him essentially a catholic theologian, but he is also very much a European. By that I mean that he never forgets his immediate context in the Europe of the nineteenth century which produced so many great philosophers and thinkers, particularly in Protestant Germany. He has read, studied, and assimilated the great philosophical systems and subjected them to his relentless questions, and it is in and through all that that he had formulated his own theology and set it forth. In a very true sense the history of Karl Barth and the development of his thought is the history of European Theology for he recapitulates the whole of Evangelical Theology in Europe in himself, bringing it to its greatest and sharpest precision as well as giving it its most massive form. It is the verdict of Hans Urs von Balthasar, another Swiss, perhaps the greatest theological genius of the Roman Church to-day, that Karl Barth has done for the whole of Protestant thought in modern times what Thomas Aquinas did for mediæval thought. Because von Balthasar reckons that Karl Barth has given Evangelical Theology its most consistent and supremely great expression, he insists that the Roman Catholic Church, in spite of the vast difference it inevitably has with Barth's theology, must nevertheless reckon with Barth as a partner in

theological learning. It is significant that the Roman Church, which regards Karl Barth as its mightiest opponent, has given him the most respectful study and yielded the greatest appreciation of his place in the history of Christian theology.

To see the place of Karl Barth in the thought of modern Europe we must contrast him briefly with Sören Kierkegaard and Karl Marx. Both Kierkegaard and Marx reacted in different ways from the philosophy and religion of the nineteenth century which tended to escape into an unreal world of spiritualized ideas and a romantic humanism. Kierkegaard revolted against the abstraction of religion in Hegel and insisted upon taking seriously the concrete reality of men and women in their flesh and blood and in their actual day by day relation to God. Marx revolted from Hegel's abstract interpretation of history, and insisted upon taking seriously the concrete life of men and women in day to day society and economic involvement. Both Kierkegaard and Marx sought to bring down the truth from the clouds and ground it where men and women of flesh and blood live. But whereas Kierkegaard did that by returning to the Incarnation of the Son of God in our flesh and blood, and the relation of the individual to the Incarnation in forgiveness and love, Karl Marx sought to do that by grounding all truth about man in the natural processes of social and economic evolution. Kierkegaard and Marx both lived in the mid-nineteenth century, but their thought only really became alive in the twentieth, and the young Barth grew up in the midst of that developing situation, putting to it his tireless questions. But he did gain from it or share with it the growing emphasis upon the full import of the Incarnation of the Son of God in our flesh and blood, and the deepening concern for our social and political involvement on earth. In his early days Karl Barth was an ardent disciple of Kierkegaard and a great admirer of Ragaz and Blumhardt and their social passion—but he could not rest content with their thought, for throughout it all was a morbid disease. Like the sheep overwhelmed in the snowdrift trying to keep itself alive by feeding upon its own wool, modern philosophy and theology suffered from a cancerous subjectivism. Religious man was trying to keep himself alive by feeding upon his own ideas. What he needed above all was to break through to concrete relations with the living God.

But there is another line of modern thought in which we have to estimate the place and contribution of Karl Barth—the attempt, which characterizes all modern thought throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to be scientific, and to work out the appropriate scientific procedure in every field of investigation, not least a critical and truly scientific understanding of reason itself. This is where Barth has often been most misunderstood and accused of irrationalism. On the contrary Karl Barth belongs to the very centre of the great European tradition which has sought to give reason its fullest place in exact and careful thinking. The result of that was his *Kirchliche Dogmatik* which one of the world's leading physicists recently declared to be the one really scientific account of theology he had come across.

We must pause at this point to look at the development of Karl Barth's thought, for there are three very distinct stages which mark his wrestling with modern philosophy and his 'break-through' to the consistent Biblical Dogmatics of which he is the master exponent.

(*a*) In his early period Karl Barth's theology falls within the thought-forms of Neo-Protestantism, as represented above all by the great Schleiermacher—that is, the liberal theology of religious individualism formulated under the influence of the Romantic Idealist Philosophy of the nineteenth century. But Barth's liberalism and idealism were of a strange sort, for even at this period we find those searching questions directed to everything before him as the young theologian sought to probe down to the depths. But this ruthless criticism was mainly in the form of self-criticism, for Barth was acutely aware of sin as the will of man to be independent of God. This stage was marked by the publication of the first edition of his *Romans* in 1918.

(*b*) The second stage was marked by a radical rewriting of that book. The first edition had not received much notice but the second edition raised a storm in the theological and philosophical thought of Germany and Switzerland, going through many editions. In it Barth expressed his deep dissatisfaction with the subjectivism of Protestant theology which confounded man with God and put man in the place of God. The new edition was deliberately intended to create an upheaval, to tear to shreds the web of self-deception in which modern theology and philosophy had become entangled. Barth likened it to the web which the spider spins out of its own inner self. The *Romans* can only be understood in terms of the great mass of nineteenth and twentieth century literature in philosophy, art, music, romance, as well as theology. It contains thousands of citations and allusions to the whole round of modern culture. From beginning to the end of the book twentieth-century man is planted face to face with Almighty God in His infinite Majesty and Holiness. This is an extraordinary book, for just as a bomb can only have its intended effect if it explodes and shatters itself, so the *Romans* blows itself up, and the reader along with it! This is the stage of Barth's thought in which he comes under the

influence of Kierkegaard, and his searching questions begin to bear some positive fruit, by letting the Scriptures speak out, unhindered by what we want them to say, the very Word of God. The main theme can be described as : Let God be God, and let man learn again to be man, instead of trying to be as God. The supreme sin of man is that he is always twisting the truth to suit his own selfish end and private ideas. Barth is here revealed to be a real genius in theological penetration and expression, for with the most powerful and dramatic strokes of his pen that analysis was driven into all aspects of modern life and thought. The *Romans* shattered the selfish individualism of theological liberalism or else made it hysterically angry! But its whole purpose was to make room again for the Holy and Transcendent God of the Bible, of Jeremiah and Paul, of Luther and Calvin.

When man is confronted by God like that there is collision, crucifixion. The Cross is seen to be the supreme and unique event of the meeting between Holy God and sinful man, and at the Cross all the subtle attempts of man at self-deification and self-aggrandisement are exposed. That is particularly true of religious man, for it is primarily religious man who is the sinner. It was, after all, religious man who crucified Jesus! And yet the breath-taking fact about the Cross is the sheer grace and infinite love of God which, while tearing away from man his rags of self-deceit, clothes him in the righteousness of God in order to stand him on his again feet as a child of the heavenly Father.

This is the stage in which Barth's theology is *dialectical* in form. His searching questions have led him to the point where he thinks about the contrasts of Holy God and sinful man, Creator and creature, grace and judgment, God's *Yea* and yet God's *No*. And here Barth is faced with a fundamental problem of all theology and all thinking about God. It is *man* who thinks, *man* who asks searching questions about God, *man* who is hungry to know God, to speak about Him and make judgments about Him ; but when that man stands face to face with God, he discovers that he stands at the bar of *God's* judgment and it is *God* who speaks to him. *What is important is not what man thinks about God but what God thinks about him!* Man begins by investigating God but discovers that God is all the time investigating him—and when he tries to express that, theologically, he finds that all his grammar gets upset and all he can do is to stammer 'yes' and 'no'. 'I believe ; help thou mine unbelief.' This is the stage when Barth thinks of the relation between God and man in terms of continuing crisis, in which eternity confronts time and God is always invading history and becoming contemporaneous, and all meeting with God is thought of as recurring encounter between the divine *Thou* and the human *I*. This was Barth's way of answering the problem of Schweitzer : How are we to get across to Jesus or let Jesus Christ get across to us without secretly turning Him into a nineteenth- or twentieth-century figure who is only too harmless and familiar ? Schweitzer's way can be described as the way of expressionism in which he sought to depict Jesus in the setting of Jewish Apocalyptic and let Jesus speak to us out of that by sheer dramatic force when we tune into Him, so to speak. Karl Barth sees lurking behind all that an un-Christian pantheism, and yet he too refuses to have a Jesus dressed up in the philosophy and culture of twentieth-century man. His restless soul and tireless criticism keep probing behind the web of human history in order to let Jesus speak to us for Himself as the Lord God. And then it came : he reached the point where he allowed Christ to speak to him out of the Bible by speaking against Barth's own self and against man's desire to make out of Jesus a modern idol. At last he had broken through the subjectivism of romantic religion and idealist philosophy to the Word of God, or rather the Word of God had broken through to him.

From now on his theology becomes the *Theology of the Word*. Henceforth the concrete Word of God speaking to him out of the Holy Scriptures becomes the object of theological knowledge and activity. But the Word of God is still obscured by Barth's inheritance of language and thought-forms which had been shaped in the mould of pantheistic philosophy and religion. This fact came home to Barth through wide-spread debates with Lutherans and Roman Catholics in the nineteen-twenties. This is where the greatness of Barth is very apparent. He debated with his opponents, giving back in masterly discussion more than they gave him. He answered their questions by other questions, with great and kind humour (and sometimes a little wrath !), exposing their misunderstanding, but all the time he let himself be criticized and be questioned by the Word of God, and allowed the debates in which he was plunged to expose to him his own mistakes, and then there came the third stage in which Barth, as he himself put it, *emerged out of his egg-shells*.

(*c*) In the second stage Barth had written the first volume of a new Dogmatics, called *Christian Dogmatics*, but during the debates that we have been describing he found he had to rewrite the whole thing, in his determination to lay the foundation for a consistent and thorough-going Biblical theology. The new volume was published in 1932 under the title of *Church Dogmatics*. In it he swept aside all the language of idealist philosophy, of Kierkegaard and the existentialist

misunderstanding of Kierkegaard; he threw out the old dialectic between eternity and time and its language of timeless crisis, and interpreted the Word of God in the most concrete terms, strictly in terms of the Person of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, who is true God and true Man in one Person.

This is the really decisive stage in Barth's theological development. It took place about 1929 or 1930 and was first signalled by the publication of a brilliant and supremely important little work on the theology of St. Anselm, published in 1931. In that little study Barth sought to grapple with the problem of scientific and exact statement in theology. It was a concern he had inherited from Schleiermacher, and in which he had broken through the subjectivism of Schleiermacher to real objectivity in the concrete Word of God. In this book Barth gives us a clear account of the relation between faith and reason, and of scientific theological procedure, which informs the whole of his theology. In it Barth insists that reason is unconditionally bound to its object and is determined by it, and that the nature of the object must prescribe the specific mode of the activity of reason. Faith is this reason directed to the knowledge of God and involves a way of knowing that answers to the nature of the unique and incomparable object, the Living God, that refuses to prescribe arbitrarily to the object how it is to be known, and that humbly tries to be obedient to Divine Revelation in Jesus Christ alone as given to us in the Holy Scriptures.

When Barth published in 1932 the first volume of his *Church Dogmatics* he sought to give careful exposition of this position in relation to Jesus Christ as the Word made flesh, who encounters us in the Holy Scriptures and in the proclamation of the Christian Church. Since then Barth has produced the eight great volumes of his *Dogmatics*, which represent the most Biblical and massive exposition of Christian theology known in modern times.[1] Along with this there has been an enormous output of volumes and pamphlets on many of the most burning religious, social, and political issues of our generation. Barth's theology can best be described as the Theology of the Incarnation, for it is not only concerned above all with the Incarnation, the Death, Resurrection and Advent of Christ, but is a theology which is fundamentally involved with the every day life of men and women of flesh and blood.

It is not easy to give a brief account of the characteristics of Barth's thought or to assess his main contributions to Christian theology, but we may single out four points for our purpose here.

[1] These are now being published in an English translation by T. & T. Clark. It is expected that two new volumes will appear in 1955. *Church Dogmatics*, I. ii. and IV. 1.

(1) Barth has made a signal contribution to the whole nature of theology in the succession of Anselm, Calvin, and Schleiermacher. He learned much from them but passed beyond them in setting forth the scientific character of theology and grounding it squarely upon a Biblical basis. Anselm had sought to enter into a dialogue with the Truth and in that dialogue to let the Truth declare itself to the inquiring reason, but in too great detachment from the living source of our knowledge of God in the Holy Scriptures. The great Scholastics sought to express Christian theology within the thought-forms of the mediæval philosophy, and forced upon modern theology the problems of objectivity and subjectivity in theological exposition, as well as the problem of theological style. By elaborating distinctions they broke up the theological truths into propositions in which the living truth became imprisoned in the strait-jacket of an out-moded logic. Calvin sought to ground all on Biblical exegesis. Schleiermacher sought to recover something like Anselm's method and St. Thomas' system, but to recover also the warm life of Christian theology, working it out into a magnificent whole in the essentially subjective forms of idealist philosophy. Barth has learned from all, recovering the objectivity of Anselm, the comprehension of Aquinas, the Biblical perspective of Calvin, and the scientific purpose of Schleiermacher, but instead of binding theology to the philosophy of one age he has sought to give theology such an expression in our thought that the living Truth becomes the master of our thinking and not thinking the master of the Truth. It cannot be said that Barth has solved the problem of theological style, but his style is governed by a disciplined scientific intention to express the Truth in its wholeness without breaking it up into parts, and dissolving its essential nature into unreal distinctions. That is partly why his books are so huge, for he tries to present the truths in their wholeness and in their own nature and all the time to ground that on exhaustive exegesis of the Scriptures.

(2) The great heart of Barth's theology is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. In Him who is true God and true Man in one person we are confronted with a mystery that is more to be adored than expressed. Nevertheless we must give ourselves to the obedience of Christ, and let all our thinking be taken captive by Him. It is only as we become conformable in mind to Christ that we can formulate aright our Christology. That is why the doctrine of the Person and work of Christ forms the centre and core of all Christian theology and determines all our thinking in the Christian Church, and that is why everything depends on faithful obedience to the Scriptures. It is in this way that Barth has

given the Church far more adequate account of the Person and work of Christ than we have known for centuries. Karl Barth is not the man to claim that he has said the last word. There can be no question of that, for theology, as Barth himself teaches, is a ceaseless inquiry with the living Word of God, in which we ever learn things new and old. Nevertheless there can be no doubt about the fact that we in our day owe Barth an immense debt which only later generations will be able properly to assess.

(3) Karl Barth's theology has become an ecumenical force not only because it strikes down into the heart of the matter as it affects every Church and because it brings within its range the whole history of Catholic theology, but because it has raised into the forefront in unparalleled fashion the doctrine of the Church. That was not his deliberate intention. His intention has always been to clear away the ground and to confront the Church face to face with Jesus Christ in all His majesty and grace, but in so doing he has forced upon our generation a reconsideration of the doctrine of the Church in terms of Christology, and a reconsideration of the whole procedure of theology as the discipline which we must undertake within the bounds of the Church where the voice of Christ is heard in the preaching of the gospel and where Christ gives us to participate in His life, death, and resurrection by His Spirit through Word and Sacrament. In this Karl Barth follows above all in the tradition of John Calvin, though he has brought his searching questions to bear on the teaching of Calvin as well, with great benefit, in a remarkable clarification of the doctrine of election.

(4) In some ways the most characteristic aspect of Barth's theology is his emphasis upon the new humanity in Jesus Christ Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen, and who will come again to renew the heaven and the earth. This is particularly characteristic because here Barth's thought moves, as elsewhere, in what he calls a 'third dimension.' By that he means that whereas so many theologians in Europe and America think primarily in terms of two dimensions, God and man, eternity and time, his thinking is governed above all by the union of God and Man in Christ, and by the new humanity which we have in Christ Jesus risen from the dead. That is Barth's *Christian humanism*, and it is that that lies behind his consuming interest in the everyday affairs of our human life and work, social and political, as well as religious. The central issue here is in many ways the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in Body. If Jesus Christ is risen only in Spirit—whatever that means—then He is, so to speak, but a ghost with no relevance to men and women of flesh and blood in history. If Jesus Christ is now Man as well as Lord and God at the right hand of the Father then we have no hope as an anchor within the veil. It is the risen humanity of Christ which forms the very centre of the Christian's hope, for it is the ground and basis of his own renewal and indeed of the renewal of all creation. The Christian Church that believes in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has no right to despair of 'this weary world of ours' or to fear gloomy prophecies of its utter dissolution into nothing. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and completely victorious over all the mighty demonic forces of destruction that threaten our world. In Him we can lift up our heads and laugh in the face of fear and disaster, for in Him we are more than conquerors over all, knowing that God who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead wearing our humanity, will not suffer the world for which Christ died and rose again to see corruption.

This doctrine of the new humanity in Christ is the new wine that bursts the old bottles. It is because the Christian Church participates already through the Spirit in the Risen Jesus that the Christian Church must refuse to live in the grave-clothes of the past; she must ever be seeking to work out in the present the appropriate forms of her new life in Christ. That is the realism that lies behind the evangelization of the world and the Christian insistence that from day to day in every sphere of our world we must live out the new life which we are given by the Saviour of men.

If I were asked to give my main criticism of the teaching of Karl Barth I think I would say that we need to have from him much more than he has yet given us, a thoroughly worked out doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and along with that a clarification and deepening of the doctrine of a living union with Jesus Christ. It is weakness at this point that seems to be behind his strange view of Baptism. Continental theology has long been marked with a radical dichotomy between academic theology and preaching, and Barth has sought to destroy that dichotomy and effectively to bridge the gap between scientific scholarship and Christian theology, but the gap between scientific theology and worship, and between Biblical exegesis and evangelism is far too wide: and it betokens a failure to give full measure to a whole dimension in the teaching of the New Testament. Karl Barth is aware of this, but he sometimes says that we will have to wait for another hundred years before we can give to the doctrine of the Spirit the full exposition we have given to the doctrine of Christ. But this generation cannot afford to wait. It belongs to the greatest need of the hour that this essential element in the life of the Church be recovered in its fullness.

Religious Education

The Place of the Sunday School in the Life of the Church

By the Reverend John G. Williams, M.A., Vicar of St. Columba's, Anfield, Liverpool

'Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.' Is it unduly fanciful to see in that act a vivid object-lesson which the Church has been all too slow to learn? Jesus called the child to come and stand side by side with Him (an act of identification which on another occasion He made more explicit in the words 'Inasmuch . . .') and then He placed the child deliberately in the very heart of that company of twelve, lifting him up into a place of conspicuous prominence as He said, 'Whosoever receives a little child like this in My name is receiving Me.' This act was the occasion for some profound teaching on the true values of the Kingdom of God, but it is impossible to miss the force of it also as a simple acted parable. It surely proclaims that the proper place of the child in the care and concern of the Christian Church (and in practice that means the local congregation) is 'in the midst.' The Church's children must be the centre and focus of the Church's work.

We often give lip-service to this truth without accepting the practical implications of it. We know that 'To-morrow's Church' will depend on the training of to-day's children; that if that is neglected the Church's life will be threatened. No one could deny that the place of the child is in the midst. And yet pause and consider what is in practice the place of the children in the life of the Church at large—and of your church in particular. Think how the Church's care of her children has been allowed to degenerate into a mere subsidiary 'department,' the preserve (sometimes the jealous preserve) of a devoted few with special gifts or a sense of vocation—a department far too often divorced from the interest or care of the ordinary 'church-goer.' (The very term 'church-goer' is a reproach and one we ought not to tolerate any longer, for it fosters the delusion that the Church of Christ is just a place that people go to, like the cinema or the concert hall, instead of a divine society, the Spirit-bearing Body, engaged in a holy war, with the obligation of seeing that every member is trained and equipped for his share in the campaign.) The ordinary man-in-the-pew often knows little and cares less about the Sunday Schools. He faintly despises Sunday School teachers. He thinks that the Church's children—if they are to be allowed to attend public services at all—should be segregated in remote corners where they cannot disturb the maturer devotions of their elders. Isn't this the kind of obscurantism with which most of us are trying to contend? It is a bleak repudiation of our Lord's whole attitude to the lambs of the flock.

The plain truth is that every baby baptized becomes immediately the concern and responsibility of every single member of the particular congregation—as well as of the Church at large. It is their business to welcome him into the Family (when we are all a little more enlightened we shall begin to have a very uneasy conscience about our present custom of hole-and-corner baptisms at tea-time on Sundays, which can never appeal to anybody's imagination as a symbol of receiving a child into the congregation of Christ's flock. A resounding reform might begin here). It is their business to ensure that he doesn't drift away and be lost to the life of the Church. It is their business to see that he is taught the Faith and comes eventually to take his due part in the worship and work of the whole Family. There is no escaping this solemn responsibility, which is laid upon them by the very nature of the Church. And even if they may be allowed to delegate some of the practical discharge of this obligation to special people (such as Sunday School teachers and club leaders) they can never for a moment relinquish their ultimate responsibility to God for the souls of these children. The Church's children are and must always be the responsibility of the whole Family.

It has been worth while to state this truth emphatically and strongly, because nothing else that can be said or done about Sunday Schools can have its full weight until this is more widely acknowledged and (in modern jargon) 'implemented.' Where this truth is in fact recognized by the local congregation the Church flourishes and the future is hopeful; where it is not, the life of the Church is languishing—and though we may discover and lament other causes of the decline, this is the one that lies at the roots of them all.

The Church cannot hope to recover her vitality until the welcoming and training of her children (in both Day and Sunday School) becomes once more the passionate interest of the worshipping community as a whole and not just of a specialized section of it.

It is within that important setting that we go on to consider the particular work of the Sunday School as part of the educational function of the whole Church. We will consider first the aim of Sunday School teaching, and then inquire in what practical ways it may become a greater concern of all church members.

The Prayer Book makes it clear that all the teaching and training of children has one purpose only—to bring them into living touch with our Lord within the sacramental fellowship of the Church. It is not just a matter of teaching Bible stories or moral principles—or even the Catechism. A child will see no point in all this information and will very soon forget it, unless he is learning to put it into practice by becoming (as early as possible) a fully active member of the worshipping body. Naturally he must be taught the Faith, but we need to remember (and to be constantly reminding him too) that it is bound to remain sterile and dull unless he is having living experience of it. And so one of the first things the Sunday School has got to do is to recognize its own limitations. It must never be regarded (as it still is in some parts of England) as an end in itself; as a self-sufficient community—sometimes in actual competition with the parent church—to which children may belong without any obligation of accepting the full status of church membership. The Sunday School is one of the functions of the Church itself, not a substitute for it; and it is doing its work properly only as it brings more and more children into the normal worship of the whole congregation, specially at the Eucharist. The ideal of Christian worship is a community, a true family, of 'young men and maidens, old men and children,' praising God together; and far from deprecating the presence of children at church services we ought to encourage it and expect it and even demand it. The Sunday School has not completed its task till every child committed to its care has become a full member of the Church.

In what ways can the congregation as a whole accept its due share of responsibility for this work? First, the Church must concern itself officially with the work of the Sunday Schools and subsidiary organizations. The Church Council, perhaps through a children's sub-committee, should keep itself constantly informed about the progress of all the work among children. It should be prepared to vote the largest possible sum of money to buy books and pictures and apparatus, and should regard the needs of the Sunday Schools as the first and not (as too often happens) the last claim on available funds. It should interest itself vigorously in the premises (whether church or parish hall) in which the Schools are held, recognizing the simple educational truth that children learn more through atmosphere than through instruction, and that dirty, dingy, or disorderly surroundings may infect them with an attitude of distaste which will later condition their whole religious outlook. A cheerful coat of paint in the church hall may be a higher priority than a new frontal for the Lady Chapel! Again, many members of the congregation who have no special aptitude for teaching might be prepared to visit regularly the babies on the Baptism Roll, keeping close touch with the parents and so reminding them constantly of the obligations they undertook at the font, until the children are old enough to come to Sunday School. Others might help children to find their way into the fellowship of the worshipping congregation by sponsoring a small number of children—calling for them, sitting with them in church, helping them to find their places and generally befriending them. For many a child whose parents never come to church this may become a real experience of 'family worship.' There is no limit to the number of people who could undertake this simple act of service. Others again may feel able to take some small share in the children's week-day activities (a most vital part of the Church's contact with them) even if it is only boiling a kettle for canteen in a junior club, and so help to foster that sense of 'belonging to a family' which is the keynote of Christian community.

Lastly there is the question of standards. Every care must be taken to see that the teaching given under the aegis of the Church can compare as favourably as possible with the highly qualified teaching given in Day School for the rest of the week. This means that our Sunday Schools should be as far as possible properly graded and equipped. The teachers should be encouraged to undergo a course of training. Their status within the life of the Church should be held in honour and regarded as a high vocation, to which the parish priest may make frequent reference in sermons. They should be admitted to their office at a service in church, so that the rest of the congregation can realize that they are being commissioned on their behalf as their representatives and be called upon to pray for them and support them in every possible way. By such means as this the Church's care of her children can be given its true place in the life of each local community—the centre of interest and the focus of attention. 'Jesus called a little child unto him and set him *in the midst.*'

The Two Circles of Faith[1]

By the Reverend F. J. Rae, D.D., Edinburgh, formerly Director of Religious Education, Aberdeen

I

In my experience there have always been two concentric circles of belief. The inner circle is small. It contains what I may without conscious exaggeration call *certainties*, the things I believe wholly. The outer circle is much larger and contains what may safely be described as *probabilities* or, at the worst, *possibilities*, things that are probably true, or at least possibly true, but have no real place in the structure of my beliefs. There is a two-way traffic between the circles. The inner circle is small and it has grown steadily smaller during my life-time as things which were once accepted as certain have passed into the region of the possibly true, or even probably true. Among these are such beliefs as the three-storied universe and the Virgin Birth. I do not actively disbelieve these or indeed many other things. They simply mean nothing in my actual life of faith. They have been carried by the flow of thought and experience from the inner circle to the outer.

The main content of the inner circle is the universality of God. That is a great and expansive truth, for it means to me that God is everywhere and in everything. What Paul says of the cosmic Christ is first of all true of God; He is *παντὰ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν*. He is everything and in everything. G. K. Chesterton in his *Notebook* has a rather wonderful passage about this: 'Have you ever known,' he writes, 'what it is to walk along a road in such a frame of mind that you thought you might meet God at any turn of the path? There is one infidelity blacker than all infidelities, worse than any blow of secularist, pessimist, atheist. It is that of those persons who regard God as an old institution. The axe falls on the wood in thuds, "God, God." The cry of the rook answers it, "God." The crack of the fire on the hearth, the voice of the brook say the same name. All things—dog, cat, fiddle, baby, wind, breaker, sea, thunder-clap—repeat in a thousand languages—"God."' And from an entirely different standpoint I quote to you the words of Sir Winston Churchill in *Thoughts and Adventures*: 'The longer one lives the more one realizes that everything depends on chance, and the harder it is to believe that this important factor in human affairs arises from the blind interplay of events. Chance, fortune, luck, destiny, fate, Providence, seem to me only different ways of expressing the same thing, to wit, that a man's own contribution to his life story is continually dominated by an eternal superior power. If anyone will look back over the course of even ten years' experience, he will see what tiny incidents, utterly unimportant in themselves, have in fact governed the whole of his fortunes and career.' I quote these two statements to illustrate my own belief that God looks out on us from all Nature and in all events and even in all human beings. My belief is a kind of Christian pantheism. Brother Lawrence tells us that his conversion took place from seeing a bare tree in winter. He must have had a very present sense of God already. Perhaps he saw beauty in the tree that would escape you or me. At any rate, beauty is one of the chief things that force the reality of God on us, and in another region what we call Providence. To see God in your life, however, depends on your total view of the universe. If you see God in the loveliness of Nature and the order in all things you will infallibly see Him in the events of your own experience. I have asked myself, where did this actual pantheism come from to me? Possibly, to begin with, from home training. But when I began to think I drank deep from two wells. I remember sitting in the Humanity class-room in Edinburgh beside a tall, lanky, Highland student. We often discussed books and other matters. I think he must have seen with sympathy my innocent callowness for he said to me one day, 'Have you read Carlyle?' I confessed my ignorance and he said, 'Read Carlyle and begin with his essays.' I followed his advice and was ushered into a perfectly new world. It was my spiritual awakening. For the first time I began to see the eternal in time and space. I imbibed Carlyle's pantheism. Some time thereafter I made my first contact with Browning, and realized how thin Carlyle's message was. I never lost his gift to me, but Browning gave it content, and especially gave me the assurance that there is not a spot in the world outside the love of God. Of course I could have learned this from the Bible. But you have to find it out for yourself, and what are Browning and Carlyle *for* but to

[1] From a Paper read to the Edinburgh Clerical Club.

help you to see what is before your eyes, and to receive what God in history, and Providence holds out to you—

I am the owner of the sphere
Of the seven stars, and the solar year,
Of Cæsar's hand, and Plato's brain,
Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's strain.—

because they are all evidence of His reality.

One of my main complaints against our friends the Romanists is that they localize God and thus deprive Him of reality. Ward, in his Life of Newman, quotes a letter of the recent convert. It was written on the occasion of Newman's first visit to Rome after his conversion. He describes his visit to a small church where the reserved Sacrament was on the altar, and goes on, 'Isn't it wonderful to think of God there on the altar looking out on the busy street?' It did not occur to him that God was in the busy street. I think it is Ward also who tells that when Newman was delivering his lectures on the English Church, he felt that one of the lectures was rather frivolous to be delivered in a church where the Sacrament was kept. He therefore caused a screen to be erected between him and the altar. That made it all right. When you read of incidents like these, you must feel some sympathy with Denney's words, 'Newman didn't know God.'

It was with the conviction of the universality of God that I approached the Christian position. With most people, I think, it is otherwise. It is through Christ that they come to believe in God. With me, it was the opposite. And as this had very real consequences I may be allowed to say a few words about them. If God is everywhere and in everything He must be, and is, in human beings, dwells in them and reveals Himself through them. In a very real sense He is incarnate in them. The great thoughts of Plato, the virtues in Aristotle, are parts of God's revelation of Himself, partially an embodiment of Himself. In this matter the doctrine of the Logos in the first chapter of St. John is a very great help to my thinking. The Logos is the outpourings of God into humanity. I interpret Him as the Second Person in the Holy Trinity who has from the earliest times spoken out of the depths of the Godhead to men as they were able to receive the Word. And so all the saints and scholars and mystics and philosophers who have added to the world's store of goodness, of vision, of truth are in reality incarnations of God. We may call the Logos the Son of God, eternal in the bosom of the Godhead and imparting to mankind the secret of Divine truth and love. This is the only way in which I can think of the Holy Trinity as a Divine reality. And it is the only way in which I can think of the Incarnation of God in Christ. From time immemorial the Word has spoken here and there, or, as I like to think of it, there has been an outflow of truth and love from the depths of the Divine Being. 'Here and there' and always partially. In Christ the Logos completely possessed a human being, gave Himself wholly to one personality. It is to say the same thing that in the Incarnation the Logos, the Word, the Son gave Himself to one who was utterly hospitable to the Divine inflow of truth and grace. And when we scan the ministry of Jesus with this in our minds we can see its nature in a new light. We can see this, for example, that the Cross was from the beginning the substance of our Lord's work, not only His revelation of God but His gift to us as an act of God, of the Son, of the Logos, and that the Cross is therefore at the heart of the universe.

I have been struggling to say what has come to me as truth, certainly imperfectly but, I hope, with a measure of success. It will appear that the great truth I have stated, the universality of God, is the supreme reality to disclose which even the Christian revelation is subservient.

II

But there is another truth that in my judgment is, if not so important, at least as real, another inhabitant of the small inner circle, which has, in my case, flowed into the centre; from the outer circle of probabilities into the circle of certainties—the Christian doctrine of Satan. I begin here with the assertion of a clear truth, that in the Bible from the first page to the last there is a persistent assertion of a real conflict between two forces, both of them personal, one of them good and the other evil. I said 'from the first page,' for in Genesis, in the earliest layer of the Pentateuch, ch. 3 and verse 15, we read that God said to the serpent, 'I will set a feud between you and the woman, between your brood and hers: they shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their heel.' St. Paul, basing himself on this passage, assures the Romans that 'The God of Peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.' This war between the hosts of God and the hosts of Satan is so woven into the whole message of the Bible that one gets an impression sometimes that there is nothing else there. Paul is explicit: 'We have to struggle, not with blood and flesh but with the angelic rulers, the angelic Authorities, the potentates of the dark present, the spirit-forces of evil in the heavenly sphere.' This conflict and its inspirer are mentioned forty times in the Gospels. At one point

Jesus says, 'any realm divided against itself comes to ruin, . . . and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then can his realm stand?' Satan is often regarded as the supreme mischief-maker intent on undoing all good—in Job, for example, and in the Parable of the Sower: 'the devil comes and carries off the word from their hearts.' To the Corinthians Paul says: 'Lest Satan should get an advantage of us,' for (he adds with a chuckle) 'we are not ignorant of his devices,' or as Moffatt rather pompously translates: 'I know his manœuvres,' or as I should prefer, 'I am up to his tricks.' How real Satan was to Paul when he could joke about his 'manœuvres.' What is final is that Jesus obviously believed that it was a personal evil spirit that tempted Him. Whitehouse, in the *H.D.B.*, sums up a discussion with the conclusion: 'that the Devil exists as a personal centre of evil influence is the undoubted teaching of the Bible.' This dualism is central in the Bible. Both Jesus and Paul were aware of a personal antagonist who was intent on bringing down in ruins their own integrity and all goodness and worth. He was at the head of one embattled power, the ruler of a kingdom as real as God's Kingdom. And a very powerful and dangerous enemy he was. Not every one could boast that he was up to Satan's tricks, for he was clever as well as malicious. And he would do you down if you were not constantly on your guard. There is a persistent tendency to this dualism in the Bible and it was only held in check by the Jewish monotheism which was even more deep-seated than the belief in Satan.

Well, is this dualism a real thing? Is there in this world a kingdom, an organised force, an evil thing with an evil inspiration constantly at work to bring to nought the work of God, to inspire wicked deeds, a power malicious, subtle, an unseen antagonist, personal and present everywhere? Is there? It is a tremendous thing to say 'yes.' As I shall show immediately, it carries with it both danger and comfort, both warning and challenge. Do you believe in Satan? What evidence is there of his presence and personality?

Well, to begin with, it is difficult to dismiss the clear and constant witness of the Bible. I don't think it is enough to say that this was a belief of ancient times, perhaps imported from Persia, at least reinforced from Persia, for it was present, full-blown long before Israel had any contact with Persia. And if it were only a temporary superstition it is at least one that is in the very fabric of revelation, and instead of shaking it off as they became more mature religiously, the Jews maintained it in increasing strength, and it was never so strong or assured as in the soul of Jesus and in the experience of St. Paul. It is true that there is a progressiveness in the apprehension of God in Israel and in its teaching. That progressiveness is the key to understanding the Bible and presenting its message. But this truth of a living and scheming and powerful antagonist of all good was never cast aside. The belief in it never weakened. The witness of the Bible on this matter is terribly real, dominating and urgent. There are two things which you cannot remove from the Bible without destroying its integrity. One is miracle. The other is the world conflict between two powers and two kingdoms and two potentates.

Further, it is not too much to say that there is in history and experience the same evidence, no more and no less, for the existence and operations of an evil spirit as there is for a good spirit. The two things that appeal to me above all others as revealing God are order and beauty. Order means mind. You cannot have order without a mind behind it. And moral order means a good mind. But it appears to me that disorder, the kind of disorder we find in the world, means a mind and a bad mind. In an interesting and thoughtful book, *Venture to the Interior*, the author moralizes about the world to-day. 'The world to my mind,' he writes, 'has never been fuller of fine thinking than it is to-day. I never pick up a paper, a magazine, or book, be they in Japanese, French, Javanese, Russian, English, or Twi (?) and fail to be struck by the fine thoughts, the idealistic feelings, the noble sentiments they express, yet, though all the contributing writers appear to be merchants of man's finest feelings, has there ever been an age that, considering its lights, has done worse things than this one, with its class hatreds, race hatreds, colour prejudices, world wars, and concentration camps? Has there been another age, that, knowing so clearly the right things to do, has so consistently done the wrong ones?' That is a mild statement of the truth. I believe that history on the whole shows an upward progress. But there is always a relapse into savagery and barbarism.

There are problems that inevitably rise in the mind that grasps and believes this truth. One concerns the origin of Satan, his family tree, so to speak. And as this more brusquely stated is simply, What is the origin of evil?, you will not be surprised that I pass it respectfully on the other side. A problem that is more practical and is not so enveloped in darkness is the one that man Friday posed to Robinson Crusoe after one of their regular Bible lessons: 'If God much strong as the Devil why God not kill the Devil so make him no more do wicked?' This question is raised on the occurrence of every dramatic disaster, during every war ('Why does God not

stop the war?'). The same problem does not cause a similar mental disturbance if you put it in an everyday dress: Why does God not stop the forger, the liar, the blackmailer? It is the same problem but not so baffling as when it assumes a portentous form.

There are other questions that thrust themselves on our minds that wiser heads than mine will find somewhat perplexing. But I would rather mention an aspect of this whole subject that offers us another crumb of comfort. You will remember that St. Paul was afflicted with a painful besetting experience which he calls his thorn in the flesh. It will not have escaped your notice that Paul calls this the messenger of Satan. In the Book of Job we are told that all the calamities which befell Job were the direct work of Satan. Well, it seems that many of the things that have come to us that are terribly difficult to bear may be due to the mischief-maker who desires to give us a fall. How often have we heard men or women saying in an agony of suffering or perplexity: 'What have I done to deserve this'? It would be a relief, mental at least if not physical, if we could say: 'This is a messenger of Satan to buffet me.' Such comfort must be used with great hesitation and humility as well as with perfect sincerity. But Paul found relief in it. I have no doubt that when he realised the truth it gave him courage to bear his trouble. And if people really believed in Satan at all those who exercise the cure of souls would have at their hand a word of cheer, especially if you could say, 'I am up to his tricks.'

Well, finally, let me add a word on this 'if'—if people really believed in Satan. But they don't. And they get rid of him in various ways. They are taught to dismiss him as a metaphor. Dr. Lowther Clarke, in his little Dictionary of Bible Phrases, has a short discussion of Satan and at the end of it he says: 'Is not all this a myth? Certainly, but how otherwise can the human mind convey the idea of evil influences coming to men from outside, not caused by God but allowed by Him to have real but limited power? Evil in the moral sense is always personal, and therefore in pictorial form we must represent extra-human evil in some such way as the Bible does.' Is this really a satisfying explanation? Does the writer not realize that belief in God may be disposed of in the same way and even in the same words? Belief in God? Is not all this a myth? Certainly. But how otherwise can the human mind convey the idea of good influences coming to men from outside? Good in the moral sense is always personal, and therefore in pictorial form we must represent extra-human good in some such way as the Bible does? But does this really account for the facts? Does it meet the evidence in history and experience for a vast power of wrong and badness organized, malicious, personal at the back of a kingdom evil with a wicked mind behind it?

Well, I prefer the sombre words of MacNeile Dixon in his Gifford Lecture: 'The kind-hearted humanitarians of the nineteenth century decided to improve on Christianity. The thought of Hell offended their susceptibilities. They closed it, and to their surprise the gates of Heaven closed also with a melancholy bang. The malignant countenance of Satan disturbed them. They dispensed with him and at the same time God took His departure.'

Contributions and Comments

Mark v. 39

Mr. Ker has not quite represented my meaning. (January number [lxvi. 125]). I do not think that Jesus 'was merely using sleep as a metaphor of death.' I agreed with Mr. Ker that the meaning conveyed to the hearers was that of natural sleep; for, as I pointed out, 'they laughed Him to scorn.' Now it seems to me not improbable that, in view of the girl's speedy restoration to life, Mark should use the normal word for natural sleep. Besides, it is not certain that Mark always observed the distinction between *καθεύδω* and *κοιμάομαι*. The Fourth Gospel does not. When Jesus speaks of sleep in Jn 11^{11} the disciples understand Him to mean literal sleep, and yet the word here is *κοιμάομαι*. The whole context of the Epistle seems to demand the meaning of death for *καθεύδω* in 1 Th 5^{10}. In Eph 5^{14} this word seems to mean spiritual sleep.

Finally, any difficulty arising from the use of *καθεύδω* in Mk 5^{39} is not to my mind anything like as great as the difficulties of Mr. Ker's view.

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Parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 19-31)

In *The Parables of the Kingdom* C. H. Dodd sums up the modern interpretation of the parables of Jesus in the words, 'The typical parable . . . presents one single point of comparison. The

details are not intended to have independent significance.'

In dealing with the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, T. W. Manson (*The Sayings of Jesus*) suggests that 'The point is that there is a future life, and that the heartless selfishness of the Sadducees arises from the fact that they deny this truth.'

On the other hand, J. M. Creed in his Commentary writes: 'There are two distinct themes: (1) that compensation for conditions in this life is to follow death; (2) that a miraculous appearance of one risen from the dead would not avail to convert those who are not converted by Moses and the prophets.'

But may it not be true that Creed's second point is the *only* point of the Parable, and that in the Parable, Jesus is using the common ideas of His time regarding the after-life (or even a popular story of His age) to deal with the question of belief and unbelief, faith and lack of faith.

If this interpretation is the true one, then the Parable tells us nothing about the opinions of Jesus concerning either the future life or man's attainment of a blessed future life, but is instead Jesus' way of saying, 'In Moses and the prophets, you have enough to enable you to believe. If, in spite of Moses and the prophets, you refuse to believe, then you would still refuse to believe even though one were to arise from the dead in the attempt to convince you.'

The 'belief' in question may well be 'Belief in a Future Life,' or 'Belief in Jesus as the Anointed One of God'; only if we knew the correct context of the Parable could we be certain. At all events, the Parable does seem to hang together as a harmonious whole when we regard *vv.* 19–28 as the 'scaffolding' on which the *one* point of the Parable, contained in *vv.* 29–31, is built; and this *one* point is in keeping with the refusals of Jesus to grant a 'sign' to authenticate Himself and to answer directly the question, 'By what authority doest thou these things?'

N. Rimmer

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In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

By Appointment

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'Ye did not choose me, but I chose you.'—Jn 15[16] (R.V.).

If you look round the shelves in the pantry at home, you will find that many of the packets and jars and bottles bear a crown and the words 'By Appointment.' You know what it means, of course. The firms which make those particular articles supply things to the royal household, and are allowed to show that they do so by placing the royal crown on their advertisements.

Early this year, I read, the Queen was making many hundreds of new 'appointments' for her reign. It seems that this happens three years after the beginning of each reign. I wonder whether any of the Queen's suppliers have been anxiously waiting to see whether the Queen would change her grocer!

But, since our present Queen has chosen to use King Edward's crown, all the firms which receive appointments will have to change the labels on their packets and on their notepaper. Soon we shall see our Bovril bottle or Lux packet with the new crown and the legend, 'By Appointment to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.' It is a very great honour; and the royal choice is as good an indication of the quality of the goods as there can be.

Our Lord's words to His disciples, 'Ye did not choose me, but I chose you,' remind us that there is another Royal Appointment which we may all enjoy. The astounding thing is not that we decided to be followers, but that Christ marked us out as His own. St. Paul never addressed the members of his little house-churches in the Roman Empire as 'the people who have decided to become Christians,' but as those who are '*called* to be saints.'

One of the happiest men I ever met spent two evenings every week visiting the patients in a home for blind people. He taught himself how to write in Braille so that he could send them Christmas cards. When he found one man who was deaf as well as blind, he learned the finger language so that they could make conversation by 'feel.' He never spoke of what he did. It was only when I asked him how he brought such zest to life that he quietly told me some of his secrets. I think he was Christ's man—'By Appointment'—don't you?

You can tell the people who have received their appointment from God. They are not necessarily those who carry the largest Bibles under their arms, or parade the market-place on Saturday with texts painted on sandwich-boards. You can tell them by the real joy they get from doing God's will in everyday things. The New Testament

speaks of a 'crown of glory' or a 'crown of life' which is to be coveted even more than a monarch's crown on a firm's label.

We change, but Thou art still the same,
The same good Master, Teacher, Friend;
We change, but, Lord, we bear Thy name,
To journey with it to the end.

What? and Why?

By the Reverend J. Ithel Jones, M.A., London

'. . . that they may be seen of men.'—Mt 6^5.

'What are you doing?' It was a little voice from the other side of the garden fence. Susan was always wanting to know what I was doing. I believe she knew perfectly well sometimes. But then, she was at the delightful age of three-and-a-half, when boys and girls live by asking questions. 'Well,' I replied, 'at the moment I'm getting this ground ready for the sowing of peas.' 'Sowing peas? Why are you sowing peas?' 'So as to have something nice to eat in the summer.' 'Why do you want something nice to eat?' 'Well, we've got to eat, so we may as well eat something nice!' 'Why have we got to eat?' At that stage I could see the questions were on the way to becoming rather difficult, so I gave in to the entreaty in her naughty eyes and lifted her over the fence.

Of course Susan's 'Why?' is one of the most important things in life. 'What' we do is very important but 'why' we do it is more important still.

We call it our 'motive.' You'll hear quite a lot about 'motive' when you grow older. You know now that the 'motive' is just our reason for doing something. It's the 'why' of our deeds.

Jesus was always stressing the importance of 'why' we do things. There were people in His day who were always in a very prominent place in the street when the hour for prayer came along. And, of course, they prayed on the spot. It's an excellent thing to pray. But when you inquire why they prayed in this particular way, you find they did it in order that people might see them. It was just the same when they gave gifts to the poor. They made a dreadful fuss and to-do about it, simply that people might notice what they were doing! Praying and giving money to the poor were good things to do. But 'why' they did it would not stand the test.

If you want to know how 'what' we do is useless unless the 'why' of our actions is right, read that great thirteenth chapter of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. He says that it's possible for us to do all kinds of things which are good in themselves—speaking in an attractive way, helping poor people, and even sacrificing our own lives—but unless the motive, the 'why' we do them, is love, we might as well not do them at all.

If we are asked why we do things, I wonder if we'd appear quite as good as we sometimes imagine ourselves to be?

The Christian Year

Second Sunday after Easter

The Discipline of Suffering

By the Reverend John R. Gray, B.D., Th.M., Glasgow

'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.'—He 12^{11}.

'Fools and bairns,' they say, 'should not see half done work.' We are all a bit foolish and little more than bairns and so, confronted as we constantly are with work only half done, we jump to our callow conclusions and hasty judgments without waiting to see what nevertheless afterward shall appear. God is not finished nor half finished with His world. He is not finished nor half finished with the men and women among whom our lot is cast. He is not even half finished with His work in our own souls and lives, and yet constantly we glance at the world, at the folks around us or at our own lives, and privately think and sometimes publicly say that God has done His work but ill. There's pain in the world, and sorrow and disappointment and distress, nevertheless afterward we may see that all of them had their purpose and their place in the kind economy of God. Just after the death of his best friend, Sir Roderick Murchison, David Livingstone in his diaries wrote: 'Alas! Alas! this is the only time in my life that I ever felt inclined to use the word and it bespeaks a sore heart. . . . I must feel resigned to the loss by the Divine Will, but still I regret and mourn.' Not many days later, however, we come across this entry: 'God forgives because He loves to forgive. He works by smiles if possible; if not, by frowns. Pain is only a means of enforcing love.'

We've all had to smack a child at a time. Unless there's something far wrong with us, we didn't enjoy doing it. If we did it properly, the child didn't enjoy it either. But who can doubt of its good effect. Children seem to 'work up' for a smacking and only after it comes are they themselves again. But if it is to do good and not harm, the punishment has to be administered by some

one who loves the child and whom the child loves and trusts. It is only from those who are normally kind and good to them that a child can accept punishment, for only so will the child be able to believe that there must be real point and meaning in it.

So, says the writer to the Hebrews, is it with you grown-ups. You Hebrews are suffering terrible things just now. Don't rebel and don't despair. It will pass; this period of trial and pain and grief. Meantime it is agony. Nevertheless afterward it will yield good fruit in character-building, in soul-making, in preparation for heaven. Behind it all, there is not blind chance nor cruel purpose but the wisdom and love of the Father God.

We are all apt to over-value the present as over against the future, to demand comfort and pleasure and happiness now. But God in His goodness takes the long view for us. He hates to see us suffer, hates to inflict on us the chastisement which awakens us to a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He hates doing it but He does it, for only by chastisement does righteousness grow. Of course, we need not wear a hair shirt or lie on a bed of nails. Self-imposed austerities lead only to spiritual pride which is the final evil. But when life lays upon our backs the stripes of pain or sorrow, it may serve to give us courage and some kind of serenity if we reflect that, howsoever bitter the experience may be, it can nevertheless afterwards by God's grace yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

That fruit we may see in our own characters. We are agaty beings most of us. If Christ is to accomplish His purpose with us and conform us to the image of Himself, there's a deal of ugliness to be chipped away and that is never an easy process. There is a phrase in Proverbs, 'the reproof of life,' and many of us who have ignored the reproofs of parents and teachers and friends have been forced by life to learn the lessons they would fain have taught us the easier way. T. E. Lawrence's accounts of life in the Royal Air Force grew progressively less bitter the longer he was in it. One wonders if that was because of some effect the discipline was having on him rather than, as he suggests, because of an improvement in the conditions of his Service life.

Of course the chastening of us may be not so much for our own sake as for the sake of others. Suffering always colours life, but it can colour it either with self-pity or with compassion. James Barrie tells how his mother lost her dearest child and he adds: 'That is how my mother got her soft face . . . and why other mothers ran to her when they had lost a child.'

It is not certainly always possible for us to see positive value in suffering either for ourselves or others even after it is past—at least not this side of eternity. But we must not forget the 'Nevertheless afterwards.' Not much that is worth understanding can be understood this side of eternity—not, certainly, the Cross which stands at the centre of our faith. To those who loved Christ in the flesh, the Cross seemed the end of all things. Nevertheless afterward they saw in it the hope of a lost and fearful world, yielding the peaceable fruit of His righteousness imputed to us all.

Life is not a tidy thing. The good suffer. The evil flourish. There is apparent injustice and much mystery and agony and longing in it. Would we have all of these taken away? Sometimes we would say 'Yes' to that. But let us remember that there would be a price to pay. Most of the world's greatest music would go and much of its poetry—the best of Beethoven and Milton and Burns. How much else comes from an ache too deep for tears or words we cannot know. Would we really like a life in which there was no weeping, no pity, no effort, no failure, no pain? With such a life would we not become shapeless, flabby things with the last traces of any greatness or goodness rooted out of us?

'Ah, yes!,' you say. 'Some tears there must be, some striving, some refusal but not this, not this that has come to me.' But there's the rub; for it is this, only this biting deep into our souls, that shapes them for heaven. It is only this thing which most of all we resent that begins to conform us to the image of the Crucified One. For, be sure of this, a life without bitter tears, a life without thorns, without a Cross, is a life without Christ. To give up Christ for ease is to pay too high a price. Close to Him we will be able to bear the worst that men can do to us or God permit, sure of this, that however grievous our chastening may be, nevertheless afterward it shall yield for us the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

The Conquest of Loneliness

BY THE REVEREND R. J. WATSON MATHEWSON, B.D., S.T.M., EDINBURGH

'A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me.'—Jn 16^{16}.

Loneliness can be one of the most soul-destroying of all human experiences. The prison guards knew that when they meted out solitary confinement to P.O.W.s as the punishment only one step removed from execution.

But circumstances far less dramatic than prison camps bring a devastating loneliness into many a

life which outwardly may show little sign of the emptiness within.

St. Paul lists some of these circumstances which ordinarily cause separation and, consequently, loneliness. First, death, with its power at one stroke to terminate the companionship of years; and then life, bringing in its course the inevitable dissolution of a family, and sometimes also estrangements to close doors of friendship once open; angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height and depth; these all in their various ways signify the fortunes and fates that buffet a man or the destiny that sets him apart from his fellows. Eisenhower, for instance, when his was the decision to launch or hold back the invasion was described as 'the loneliest man in the world.'

His loneliness was short-lived but the loneliness of most accompanies them day in, day out; perhaps especially day out, when you close the big door and there is no one to listen to your story, no one to praise or blame. Of course, there are the wireless and books and hobbies; but at best these are only devices to take the mind off the essential loneliness within.

In these circumstances, lest we be overwhelmed by self-pity or resentment, comes the reminder that we as Christians have a Saviour who Himself well knew the meaning of loneliness, and who was preparing His disciples for its coming when He said, 'A little while, and ye shall not see me.' The Christian, therefore, cannot expect to escape the experience of loneliness; but his Master does show him how to deal with it when it comes. For Christ would remind us that:

(1) *Loneliness has its Advantages.* Although He always brings comfort to the lonely heart, He never suggests that there is necessarily anything disastrous in just being alone. In fact, the reverse. Both by teaching and example He stresses the benefits of frequent isolation from one's fellows.

This is sound psychology; the developing personality of the child needs some private life; the marriage to which the in-laws have the key is in jeopardy.

But this is also sound religious practice. The place for prayer is the inner lonely chamber of the heart; there with the door shut 'pray to thy Father which is in secret.' The place where ultimately temptation is to be conquered is in the isolation of our own private decision where we wrestle with the tempter alone. The place where finally we yield our lives into the Saviour's keeping is at His Cross where individually we offer our allegiance and receive God's forgiveness as our own personal possession.

As it is, however, in our age most people will do anything rather than be alone; any distraction is acceptable. Are they afraid that solitude will turn out to be a room peopled by ghosts—broken hopes, unsatisfied yearnings, haunting remorse? 'When I am alone,' wrote the aged tempestuous Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough in 1742, 'my reflections and recollections almost kill me, and I am forced to fly to the society of those I detest.' Or do they fear that they will be forced at last to attend to a still small silent voice with its insistent claim? If they knew that strength and peace await them in a solitude shared with God they would not fear it. 'All the evils of life have fallen upon us,' says Pascal, 'because men will not sit alone quietly in a room.' This may be an exaggeration, but nevertheless loneliness has its advantages. It gives us the chance to drink deep of the living waters of God.

(2) *Loneliness has its Disciplines.* On the lonely road there are, for the Christian, sign-posts to follow, and a company to join.

The sign-posts point forward and they indicate that the journey is short. 'Again a little while and ye shall see me.' In other words, although faith is often at its lowest when we are loneliest, then is the time to go on believing that God is faithful, that our Jesus can repay from His own fullness all He takes away, that safe and blessed we shall meet at last, and all within measurable time. This is true not only of our eventual reunion with the dead, but also of the renewal of our sense of God's reality after some period of doubt, as with Thomas, or even denial, as with Peter.

The first discipline of loneliness is to keep on trusting, confident that whatever else may bring separation into our lives nothing will separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ.

There is also a company to join. 'We become related to Christ singly,' writes Dr. John A. Mackay, 'but we cannot live in Christ solitarily.' Throughout His last counsels to His disciples runs Christ's reminder that although He is about to leave them they will still have each other. Their fellowship will survive.

So no one should be utterly lost in loneliness who belongs to a church. It is true that some who do belong remain uncomforted, but it should not be too readily assumed that this is always due to the local congregation's failure to seek them out. Equally often the blame lies at the door of those who need companionship but defend themselves against it. The complaint, 'I don't know any one in the church,' invites the question, 'But have you ever tried to get to know any one?' Rather, if he looks for it, the lonely soul will always find somewhere at the heart of a Christian congregation a warmth of fellowship and a conception of service to fill his life. But before he can find, he must be prepared to seek.

(3) *Loneliness has its Reward.* 'You have sorrow now,' said Jesus, 'but I will see you again and your sorrow will turn into joy.' The reward of loneliness is not therefore merely the joy that will succeed the pain, but a joy that comes out of and depends upon it. Loneliness lightened by faith is transmuted by the Divine alchemy into a radiant experience, deepening and enriching life.

T. L. Garvin once said, 'I always remind myself that whatever happens in the course of one's time on earth, there is never any cause for despair, because if it does not make for happiness, it will make for character.' Christ does not speak here of the effect on character of victory over loneliness, although that is always considerable. He does speak of the happiness that emerges from it, a joy equivalent to one of the greatest joys in all human experience, the joy of a mother who through the lonely way of pain brings her child into the world.

The last thing, therefore, that a lonely person should believe is that he is redundant. Rather if he finds God's recompense for loneliness in his own life he has a message of incomparable worth for others passing through their Gethsemanes. For he can tell how the wilderness and the solitary place can be made glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Dimensions of the Love of Christ[1]

'That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.'—Eph 3^{17-19}.

(1) *The love of Christ is a very wide love.* Human beings are by nature capable of deep affection for one person or a few—for lover or mate or child, or for a group of kinsfolk and chosen friends; and this provides a necessary elementary schooling in the meaning of love. Yet, by itself, this natural human loving carries no sure promise of any generous width of reach. Indeed, the natural man is apt to build a wall round the field of his narrowly exercised affections, and to resist violently any invasion or disturbance of it. Hence it is that the ground of natural affection, uncleansed of possessive exclusiveness, can become the seed-bed of jealousy, the most venomous of the emotions, and of hatred, the most destructive.

In his book about the exploits of Wing Commander Yeo-Thomas as a secret agent, Bruce Marshall tells how that incredibly brave man met secretly in Paris in 1943 with the leaders of the various groups of the underground French Resistance, and managed to reconcile their differences and bring them to a common plan of action. Marshall's comment on the episode is this: 'In spite of what St. John says, the only time that it is really easy to love our neighbour seems to be when he is helping us to hate another neighbour.'

How generous and inclusive, by contrast with our double-edged natural human loving, does the love of Christ appear! The gospel is the story of One moving about among all sorts and conditions of men—sturdy fishermen and city lawyers, young and old, rich and poor, Pharisees and publicans—and out towards each and all there goes the warmth and welcome of His love. And so it has come about that towards this warming fire down all the ages all kinds of men and women have run or crept or stumbled—out of their loneliness, out of their weariness, out of their shame and self-disgust—to find solace and strength and new beginnings. And so, too, it has come to pass that the Church of Christ is to-day a world-wide society drawing its members from every nation under the sun.

(2) *Very wide, yes, and very deep.* I have never found it very hard to love my neighbour up to a point—the point where my neighbour sooner or later turns out to be less attractive than he seemed at first blush; to be difficult, or a regular twister, or perhaps just a bore; to make greater claims on my time or my sympathy or my purse than it is easy or pleasant to meet. When the point is reached at which natural liking meets a check, how easy we all find it to retreat from the relationship that has disappointed us.

But the love of Christ went on and on, and never drew the line, for its central principle was no mere *bonhomie*, but a steadfast will to bless its object, and the firm faith that God can change whatever is misthriven or repulsive in any human being into goodness and moral beauty. Over many years I remember how once in a sermon Dr. J. R. P. Sclater told of a sculpture representing Christ and Mary Magdalene which he had seen during a holiday in Italy. You know how Mary is often portrayed by painters and sculptors—as a beautiful young girl, the victim of her own beauty and the lusts of men. This artist had represented her as a vice-ridden old hag, rotten with disease of body and spirit, and yet he had succeeded in imprinting on the ravaged face a dawning wonder and hope in the recognition that even for her Christ had a welcome and an ambition.

I think of a certain sea-coast town which boasts a great stretch of sands. But in summer-time, after a day's invasion by multitudes of trippers, its lovely beach is often so defiled by refuse that not an army of workers could cleanse it. Yet next

[1] A. C. Craig, in *The Sacramental Table*, 49 (reviewed in 'Literature').

morning it will lie shining and golden again: during the night the resistless brushes of the tide with the depths of the Atlantic behind them have swept it clean from end to end. The love of Christ is such that it is not repelled by the unloveliness of our sins, but grasps them and draws them into its fathomless depths, so that we may be forgiven and cleansed. The love of Christ is a very deep sea, from which flows wave upon wave of grace.

(3) *Very wide, very deep, yes, and very high.* We can all think, can we not, of instances of human friendship which have not been altogether beneficial to the parties to them—not that anything positively disreputable need have characterized the relationship, but simply because neither of the friends has been of the make-up to give a firm lead to the other where right and wrong are concerned.

How different it was, and is, as between Christ and His friends! Think only of two representative figures of the New Testament. Simon Bar-Jona comes on the stage a man of sand—a bundle of impulses of which the more generous natural ones were defaced by self-esteem and betrayed by cowardice. But under the relentless pressure of the love of Christ that unreliable nature is fused into Peter, the man of rock, who will be faithful to death in the leadership of the Church. And Saul of Tarsus—think of the change Christ wrought in him. Unlike Simon, he comes before us at first as already a man of rock, a man hewn out of the flint of Jewish pride. He could say of himself, 'Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.' How the passage seems to run off his pen, as though he had had it off by heart for long years. And then the love of Christ takes hold of this flinty Jew until at last this same man writes: 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after. . . .'

And so it has been down all the Christian centuries: to be within the friendship of Christ has always meant to climb, to climb or to lose touch; for He always leads upwards, and never tolerates the second-best in any man.

(4) *Wide as the earth, deep as the sea, high as heaven, yes and long as eternity.* Can you think of anything so priceless in our human life as lifelong friendships? And yet such happy associations are perhaps less numerous than might be expected. Human friendship can be a sadly brittle and fragile bond: it can break over business rivalries or political differences or even on disputes about the mending of a garden fence: it can be severed by mischance; it can rust away through neglect.

But the love of Christ is an eternal love, being the love of God Himself. It is pledged to us in the unspeakably beautiful sacrament of Baptism; it is there, tender and shielding, for little children; it is there, understanding and respectful, for the shy questings and false starts of adolescence; it is there for the struggles of manhood, the slowing step of middle-age, the contracted evening of life, and it will be there, divinely strong and succouring, in the hour and beyond the hour when flesh and heart do faint and fail, and vain is the help of man. For the love of Christ is a very long love.

Very wide, very deep, very high, very long; yes, and offered freely and without price to *you*—yet offered all in vain unless you close with it and engage yourself to it. There is a story of a missionary in Canada whose area of travel was so wide that he could only make visits to any settlement at long intervals of time. His last act in one visit to a settler's home was to teach a small invalid boy the text, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' and he did it by the method of a word to each finger, saying finally and suiting action to word, 'Remember always to hold on to the fourth finger—the Lord is *my* shepherd.' When he came back to that home two years later, the boy was not there. He had died in the dark of a winter night; and, said the mother, 'We found him in the morning with his hands outside the coverlet, his left hand clasped round the fourth finger of the right.'

When the bread and wine are carried round, there will be enough for all, and a portion for each. Take, eat, in penitence and faith; close afresh with the offer of salvation, engage yourself afresh to Christ, that you may better comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and know the love of Christ, 'which passeth knowledge.'

Fifth Sunday after Easter

Vocation

By the Reverend Harold G. Newsham, M.A., Hartford, Conn., U.S.A.

'For he is a chosen instrument of mine.'—Ac 9^{15} (R.S.V.).

Paul is an outstanding instance, yet merely one of an innumerable host, of those whose careers are inexplicable unless it is a fact that God has a steadfast purpose working through the ages, and that in pursuance of that purpose He chooses men and women as His instruments.

In this conviction, let us consider three closely related matters. First, *who* are chosen. Second, *how* they are chosen. Third, *for what* they are chosen.

1. As to the question *who are chosen,* a hundred

and fifty years or so ago you would have excitedly anticipated an utterance on the burning topic of the day. Are some, in the unfathomable counsels of God a limited number, chosen for eternal life; and all others, not so chosen, damned?

But this is now one of those

> old, unhappy, far-off things,
> And battles long ago.

We find it impossible to doubt that God's call is to every man. There is a worship all can offer. There is a work and witness all can render.

Indeed, we go further. We say that man is born for this. We say that every man belongs to more than the biological, the economic, or the social order; we say that though a man may attain physical perfection or may fit smoothly into the productive machinery, or may attain happy and enriching human relationships in society, not so does he find his fullest life. Only when in some real sense he has come to know God and has heard some word of God addressed to his own soul, does he begin to approach the stature for which he was loved by God into life.

Such a call of God out of ignorance into truth; out of the temporal into the eternal; out of darkness into life; out of bondage into freedom; out of death into life—what ways and ways the Scriptures have of describing it—is the gracious call of God to every man.

This is the call wherewith every son of man is called. But it seems certain that, over and above this, God calls certain folk for special purposes as His chosen instruments. From Abraham and Moses; through the prophets; through the disciples specially hand-picked by Christ; and on to a Carey, a Livingstone, a Schweitzer, a Kagawa, God is working a purpose out as year succeeds to year.

'How odd of God,' wrote Hilaire Belloc, 'to choose the Jews.' But is it not always odd? Those whom God chose as His special agents were always astounded by His choice. They felt utterly inadequate. 'But, Lord,' said one, 'I am only a child.' 'Who am I,' expostulated Moses, 'that I should go to Pharaoh?'

When God wanted the gospel to go to India He chose a cobbler. When He wanted the Light to enter darkest Africa He chose a lad minding a loom. When He inaugurated His Church He called some fishermen. He chose the fiercest persecutor of that Church to become its greatest missionary. Paul could never cease marvelling at this amazing choice; nor at its constant repetition. 'The weak things chosen to confound the mighty! Things which are despised has God chosen; yea, things which are not, to bring to nothing things which are.'

Whom does God choose? This is certain. Those chosen instruments invariably know their own insufficiency, their own unfitness, their own unworthiness. Yet having heard God's whisper they dare not be disobedient. Their trust will not be in anything human prudence can assess or human foresight provide—though these will not be neglected. Their ultimate trust, however, will be in the Grace and Power of God. He who has called, will furnish; He who has demanded, will succour. He who has made, will carry.

2. But *how does God call?* In the last analysis, of course, no one can really say. Personal certainties are ultimately incommunicable. Frederic Myers was surely right when he put this on the lips of Paul:

> How should I tell or how can ye receive it,
> How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

Yet there is this that must be said. In spiritual biography it seems possible to distinguish two kinds of calling. There is the specifically personal one, of which Paul is the classic example. And there is a more general one, of which Isaiah may be considered typical.

Paul's experience was so dramatic that he described it as an 'arrest.' He was turned 'right about face' on the highway. He felt himself singled out for a special mission, though its precise nature at first was like 'sealed orders.' It is an experience that does recur, to-day as yesterday.

Yet there is another way, perhaps a more frequent way, in which God calls. Isaiah heard it one day in the Temple, when the liturgy which hitherto for him had been a matter of form and convention suddenly took fire. Disturbing events of the day, a shaking of foundations long supposed immovable, had given him, like ourselves, most seriously to think. Suddenly he realized, as never in his life before, that the supreme Reality, the only Reality, is God. With the violence of a blow in the face he felt the contrast between life as he knew it and the glory for which God had surely designed it. It seemed as if the good, the just, the pure, the divine, engaged in a stern struggle against evil, was calling aloud for volunteers.

It was a *need* which haunted him, just as it did one of the early assailers of Everest who went to India to mountaineer and remained there to become a chosen instrument in the ministry of healing. 'Who will go for us?' has been heard over and over again from Isaiah's day to this. When the desire to volunteer, to cry, 'Here am I, send me,' becomes an overpowering compulsion, what is there to say but this: a chosen instrument is offering himself to the uses of the Hand of God?

3. Finally, a word on *the purpose for which we are called.* Here, again, we may think of both a

general purpose to which all are called, and a more specific purpose to which it would seem only some are called.

Consider these two quotations. 'How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough, that glorieth in the shaft of the goad, that driveth oxen, and whose discourse is the stock of bulls? He will set his heart upon turning his furrows, and his wakefulness is to give his heifers their fodder. So also with the potter sitting at his wheel. He will fashion the clay with his arm and apply his heart to finish the glazing. These maintain the fabric of the world; and in the handywork of their craft is their prayer.'

That was written over twenty centuries ago. Here is another version, written by Leslie Weatherhead to-day. 'God called Peter from a fishing business; Matthew from an office; Livingstone from a loom; Chalmers from a plough; Moffat from a garden; Mary Slessor from a mill; and they became immortal. But if the world is going to be filled with the glory of God, He must have His ministers in all those places, not only called from them.'

There we have the vocation to which all are called. God is the Creator, and He calls us to be co-workers with Him in the natural order, whether in industry and labour, in politics or statesmanship. A recovery of this sense of spiritual vocation in our trades, professions, and employments is one of society's most urgent needs to-day. 'In the handywork of our craft' should be our prayer.

But God is not only Creator. He is Redeemer. For men, like sheep, have gone dreadfully astray. And here also, more amazingly still, we are called to be co-workers with Him. We are saved that we may save. We are forgiven that we may forgive. We are comforted that we may comfort. We are kindled that we may ourselves illumine. 'Heaven doth with us as we with torches do. Not light them for themselves.'

This redemptive purpose of God, this bewildering privilege of sharing in it with Him, has brought the Church of Jesus Christ, the world-wide Church, into being. We are all called into its fellowship. We are all part of its ministry. Yet it is evident there must be special tasks, specific responsibilities—it may be of preaching; of teaching; of administration—for which God whispers in the ear of some chosen instrument; or issues an urgent appeal for volunteers. Pray for an even more sensitive ear.

'Help us, O God, that we may walk more worthily according to the vocation whereunto we have all been called; and that particular vocation into which we have each been called.'

Recent Foreign Theology

Ecclesiastes. The energetic Professor J. van der Ploeg, of Nijmegen, has published the fourth part to be issued of a new full-scale commentary on the Old Testament now appearing in Dutch, of which he is one of the editors. The parts which had previously appeared dealt with Joshua, Proverbs, and the first six of the Minor Prophets, and were written by Mgr. B. J. Alfrink, Professor van der Ploeg, and Dr. D. Deden respectively. The new issue is devoted to Ecclesiastes.[1] As in so many of the commentaries which are appearing in many countries the text on which the work is based is a new translation from the original made for this series by the writer of the commentary, resting on sound critical study of the Hebrew. There is an adequate Introduction and a detailed verse-by-verse commentary. Dr. van der Ploeg's work rests on a wide acquaintance with the work of other scholars in many countries, both Roman Catholic and non-Catholic—including a commentary in modern Greek. He ascribes the Book of Ecclesiastes to the third century B.C., but rejects the view which has been advocated by some recent scholars that our present Hebrew text is a translation from Aramaic. He holds that the language is influenced by Aramaic, but that is a different thing. He regards the Book as a collection of more or less loosely connected independent sayings, to which some accretions have been added in the course of time. His commentary is quite up to date, and would be valuable if only because it draws on the latest literature.

[1] *Prediker* [1953]. Romen and Zonen, Roermond en Maaseik; Fl. 3.06, or by subscription 2.70.

The Election of Israel. Professor Th. C. Vriezen, who a few years ago published an outline of Old Testament theology [2] in Dutch, has now issued in German an important contribution to the study of that theology in a monograph on the Old Testament teaching on the election of Israel.[3] The main part of this work is a careful examination of the terminology of election, and a detailed exegetical study of the passages where it is used of Israel. The Term בָּחַר in this connexion first

[2] *Hoofdlijnen der Theologie van het Oude Testament* [1949].

[3] *Die Erwählung Israels nach dem Alten Testament* [1953]. Zwingli Verlag, Zürich; Swiss Fr. 12.50.

occurs in Deuteronomy, but though the term is coined here for this idea, Vriezen recognizes that the idea itself is older. Outside Deuteronomy it is found most frequently in Deutero-Isaiah. On a number of points Vriezen differs from other writers on aspects of his subject, and every reader —including those from whom he differs—will learn much from his study. He maintains, rightly, that the election is never election for its own sake, but election for a purpose. It arises from the grace of God, and from this alone, but it is election for service. He holds that the election of Israel is immutable, but in a concluding section briefly finds that the Church is incorporated in that election of Israel. Altogether this little book will well repay careful study, and is to be warmly welcomed.

Daniel 2 and 7. A brief study of the interpretation of the four successive kingdoms of the visions of Dn 2 and 7 has appeared from the pen of Professor Martin Noth, of Bonn.[1] The idea of four successive world empires or ages does not appear in the Old Testament before the Book of Daniel, but does not seem to have been original with the author of this Book, who was compelled to strain history to fit the scheme. It was doubtless taken over from abroad, where it figures in the work of classical authors, and the author took over the scheme but re-supplied it with content. Ch. 7 is held to be later than ch. 2, and to be an appendix to the stories of thefirst half of the Book. The climax of both lay in the Macedonian period, and both show the same attitude to history—not as something which of itself should steadily lead to the climax but as something that should continue its changeful way until God should intervene and wind up its process.

Dutch Old Testament Studies. The tenth volume of studies published by the small but active Dutch Old Testament Society has now appeared.[2] More than half the volume is taken up by a doctoral dissertation in English by L. A. Snijders on the meaning of the word זָר, which is held to mean, fundamentally, *what is alien to its setting*. Hence *foreign* is but one of the developments from this, and in Proverbs the אשה זרה does not mean *a foreign woman*, but one with whom a man improperly associates. The adjective is used of gods improperly worshipped in Israel, and of persons who improperly aspire to the priestly office, or of offerings improperly offered by such persons. The remaining articles include two in English and three in French. The former consist of a valuable discussion of the table of nations in Gn 10 by Father J. Simons, distinguishing an original core from accretion and showing its principle of arrangement, and a discussion of Ex 18 by C. H. W. Brekelmans attacking the Kenite hypothesis. The French articles are by Father van der Ploeg, dealing with the origin and status of the שטרים in Israel, by Father van den Born, discussing the land of Magog and the place names Gibeah and Gibeon, and by P. A. H. de Boer, dealing with the root קוה in Hebrew, and finding a single underlying idea beneath the three roots distinguished by Koehler's dictionary. This underlying idea is that of solidity and firmness. Altogether this is a very valuable issue, which will enhance the reputation of the Dutch Society.

[1] *Das Geschichtsverständnis der alttestamentlichen Apokalyptik* [1954]. Westdeutscher Verlag, Cologne and Opladen.

[2] *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, vol. x. [1954]. Brill, Leiden.

Man and Money. A short study of the problem of wealth and poverty from the Christian standpoint comes from the pen of J. Ellul, under the title of *Man and Money*.[3] The nature of the modern problem is first set forth in the background of the conflict between Capitalism and Communism. The author insists, however, that the real problem lies not in any system, but in men. He devotes much space to the survey of the teaching of the Old Testament, which is that wealth is a blessing but also a temptation, and that the rich are sometimes righteous, but are often unrighteous and condemned. As against this he finds riches to be wholly condemned in the New Testament, where wealth is personified as Mammon and set over against God. In view of this the teaching of some of the early Reformers that virtue must be rewarded by wealth and that wealth is the evidence of virtue is repudiated. The author then essays a summary of the teaching on wealth which should be given to children, and argues that while they should be taught that money is a necessity, they should be taught its perils and trained to give it no more than its due place. What is of more importance than the possession of wealth or poverty is the attitude with which one faces the experience, for either wealth or poverty may be a spiritual peril, as either may be a blessing.

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[3] *L'Homme et l'argent* (*Nova et Vetera*) [1954]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel; Swiss Fr. 5.50.

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